



THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK
AND
NOVEMBER EVE

BY AMÉLIE RIVES

Novels:

THE QUICK OR THE DEAD
SHADOWS OF FLAMES
THE GHOST GARDEN

Drama and Verse:

AUGUSTINE THE MAN
HEROD AND MARIAMNE
ATHELWOLD
AS THE WIND BLEW

The Sea-Woman's Cloak and November Eve

Two Plays

By

AMÉLIE RIVES

[PRINCESS TROUBETZKOY]



Pierce Library
WITHDRAWN
Eastern Michigan University
From EOU Library
La Grande, OR 97850

CINCINNATI
STEWART KIDD COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

COPYRIGHT, 1923, BY
AMÉLIE RIVES (PRINCESS TROUBETZKOY)



All Rights Reserved

The plays in this book are fully protected by copyright in the United States, Great Britain and Colonies, and countries of the Berne Convention. For permission to produce these plays application must be made to the author, who may be addressed in the care of the publishers, Stewart Kidd, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Printed in the United States of America
THE CAXTON PRESS

"Everybody for Books.. This is one of the Interlaken Library

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

A Play

TO
M. JULES BOIS
POET AND INITIATE

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

COLUM DARA, *a fisherman.*

MICHAEL DARA, *his younger brother.*

GANORE, *a sea-woman.*

WIDOW DARA, *mother of Michael and Colum.*

SARA DARCY, *a young vixenish woman.*

A PRIEST.

Neighbors, Voices-of-the-Sea-Women
Ganoré's sisters.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

THE FIRST ACT

Scene: A cave opening in a great arch on the sea, with rocks at its mouth and the sea gushing among them. The tide is at the flow and a full moon shining. It lights the waves and part of the cavern, but to the left are masses of rock leading upward, all in darkness.

Colum is seen descending along these rocks, followed warily at a little distance by Michael. Colum carries a lighted torch in one hand and a jug of spring-water in the other. Michael holds a small loaf and a pail of milk. They are both without their shirts and their seaman's breeches are rolled high on their thighs. Colum is about twenty-five, Michael about nineteen.

MICHAEL (*halting in dread*)

Colum! . . . For the love of God, let you think it over one time again before you'll go to the end of this matter. . . .

COLUM (*impatiently*)

What has you now, to be screeching from the face of the cliff like a Solan goose? Come along down with you and keep silent.

MICHAEL (*not moving*)

It's a great fear has me, Colum!

COLUM (*with a sort of lofty contemptuous patience*)

And what is it is scaring you, my grief!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

MICHAEL (*shuddering*)

The sea . . . and the whisht noise of it, and
the fiery white look of it . . . and the thing
we're to do to it!

COLUM

Come along down, I say, or it's the pitch dark-
ness you'll be left in. The torch is almost out
on me.

MICHAEL (*coming down unwillingly*)

It's the ugly shadows surely, it does be casting
round about, and they reaching after us from
all sides. (*He stops short with a loud cry.*)

COLUM (*angrily*)

God help you! It's a girl you are entirely!
To be howling at shadows, like a scalded dog
at a saucepan! Come along down this minute,
or I'll leave you to the darkness!

MICHAEL (*almost sobbing with terror*)

It was something touched me was soft and hard
together, and it wet too!

COLUM (*grimly*)

It's your own head is soft and hard together
and it's wet you'll be too, with your own
tears, and you not coming down at once.

MICHAEL (*coming down tremblingly*)

. . . Oh! (*He gives another cry less loud.*)
Do not hit me, Colum. . . . 'Twas only my
foot slipped on these sloppy rocks.

COLUM

If it's peace of mind you're wanting, do not
spill a spill of that milk, or let that loaf escape
from you. . . .

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

MICHAEL

They're safe sure as unborn infants. (*He comes down at last and stands beside Colum.*)

COLUM (*kindly*)

Isn't it quieter you're feeling, and you down beside of me at last?

MICHAEL (*doubtfully*)

I wouldn't be saying it's just exactly *quiet*
I feel. . . .

COLUM

Look at the grand, bright moon is shining for us! Queen Maeve and she in a shawl of silver would not be finer! (*He sticks the torch in a cleft of the rock.*) When she touches that craggy shelf there, it's then we must make our offering. . . .

MICHAEL (*shivering*)

It's a queer thing surely the way your thoughts do be always turning back to the Pagan Queens and customs . . . (*lowering his voice*) and the old gods.

COLUM (*gazing out at the silvered sea*)

I have heard tell the gods do never grow old. (*In a dreamy tone*) And Lîr the God of the Sea . . . and Manannan his son . . . it's mighty gods they were. . . . (*he drops his voice still lower*) and are. . . .

MICHAEL

I missed your last words, brother.

COLUM

It's no miss they were at all.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

MICHAEL (*timidly shivering again*)

Isn't it tempting the High God of St. Colomb and St. Paidric, you are, to be offering respect to the dead gods?

COLUM (*smiling strangely*)

And what harm is it could be in it and they dead?

MICHAEL (*after a pause*)

People do be saying the dead walk at whiles. . . . (*Drawing closer to Colum.*) It's a terrible thought I have. . . .

COLUM

And what like is your terrible thought?

MICHAEL (*whispering*)

That the dead gods could be walking at whiles, maybe on the face of the sea. . . .

COLUM (*with his queer voice and look*)

Maybe. . . .

MICHAEL

It's wonderful your courage is, to be about doing what you will do when the moon reaches that ledge, and you with that "maybe" in your heart. (*Colum makes no answer, and after a pause, Michael goes on.*) Why is it you are waiting for the moon to finger that ledge?

COLUM

My father did be telling me when I was a *bouchal*, that old folk called it "The Throne of Lîr." 'Twas a saying among them that at whiles when the tide was at the highest, Lîr would be after seating himself upon it with Manannan on his right hand, to put judgments

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

on the sea-people, and they swimming round about his footstool the way their red hair would be spread out over the water like a royal carpet.

MICHAEL

God save us! . . . Was he after seeing them himself?

COLUM

He was waved by his mother at the ebb-tide the like I was, and the Sea Lords took him in the end, but I'm after thinking he had a sight of them before that day.

MICHAEL

St. Michael protect us! I'm liking this matter less and less. 'Tis great peril you're courting!

COLUM

How, in the name of all the saints, could it bring peril on me to throw offerings into the sea, and it called "The Treasury of Mary?"

MICHAEL (*eagerly*)

Is it to the blessed Virgin you'll be offering them?

COLUM (*enigmatic again*)

It's to the one who'll be accepting them.

MICHAEL

Let you tell me a thing first. Is Sara Darcy knowing about this?

COLUM

She is not.

MICHAEL (*as if to himself*)

It's in a blue rage she'll be if ever she comes to find out.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

COLUM (*carelessly*)

It's in a purple rage she may be for all I care . . .
or a crimson one and it striped with orange.

(*A pause.*)

MICHAEL (*with a curious, shy eagerness*)

But you do be loving her, surely?

COLUM

At whiles I'm loving her, and at whiles I'm
hating her, and at whiles she's clean out of my
thought.

MICHAEL

Those are queer feelings surely.

COLUM

All feelings are queer entirely.

MICHAEL

Well, it's Sara isn't guessing how you feel
towards her.

COLUM

And why do you say that?

MICHAEL

Because it was myself heard her telling Nora
Mahon the banns would be called at Samhain.

COLUM (*sarcastically*)

Think of that now! It's for a fish she's mistaken
me surely and she throwing a net of words
about me! The black-browed slut!

MICHAEL (*angrily*)

Do not be calling her ugly names, and she the
handsomest girl within a six days' walk and a
ride till he'd fall on a blood horse!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

COLUM (*instead of getting angry in turn, stares, then laughs and grasping the boy by the shoulders, laughs again softly*)

My grief! If it's not yourself is in love with Sara!

MICHAEL

I am not! I am not! Take your hands from me. . . . Leave me go, I say!

COLUM (*releasing him good-naturedly*)

If it's in your tempers you are, small good there'd be in talking sense to you, yet I'll say this much: there was never the woman out of the sea or in it would be worth a squabble between two loving brothers.

MICHAEL (*sullenly*)

It's not me is in my tempers nor squabbling with anybody at all.

COLUM

If it's Sara has us divided, sure my blessing on your wedding with her and a houseful of childer to you!

MICHAEL (*furiously*)

It's easy for you turning good air into bad words, and you knowing well and better it's never a look she'll be giving me, but always fixing her eyes on you the way they'll be after sticking to you like an ornament of jewels!

COLUM

There's no need for you to go to raging. I'd sooner take the crimson cloak a sea-woman was after leaving on a rock, the way she'd have to follow after me and be my mate, than wed with Sara Darcy!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

MICHAEL (*still sullen*)

Well, let you be taking a sea-woman's crimson cloak from the rocks, and let her be slapping on her fish-tail after you through life,—then you'll find out maybe, the fine, lively woman you've lost in Sara.

COLUM

'Tis not fish-tails the sea-women have, Ninny!
. . . but little feet, slim and pale as the tips
of a new moon!

MICHAEL (*huffly*)

Maybe it's a ninny I am, but not ninny enough to be believing in such creatures at all, tails or feet! (*He crosses himself.*) The Saints between me and them!

(A long, wild note, soft yet clear, rising, falling and rising again to die away high in the air, sounds from over the sea.)

COLUM

Whisht! . . . Did you hear that?

MICHAEL (*in terror again*)

Holy Mary! Did I hear it? . . . Let us be off out of this place! . . . 'Twas the shriek of a sea-woman, and me after talking of them without respect! Let us be off! Quickly! (*He tries to snatch the torch from the cleft in the rock, but Colum catches his arm.*)

COLUM

Do not lose your wits for the cry of some sea-bird.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

MICHAEL

Sea-bird is it? . . . 'Twas the screech of a sea-woman it was, I'm telling you, and she wild with longing to warm her wet breast on the flesh of a mortal man! Come away with me or I'll die on you in this unholy place . . . I'll die on you surely!

COLUM (*taking the torch from the cleft, and pointing to the ledge on which the moon is now shining*)
It's time it is for my business, so help me without more fuss, or let you go up by the way you came down.

MICHAEL

If it's set on your doom you are, I'll share it with you to the butt of misfortune, but do not scorn me for a coward if I do be howling and lamenting and some female sea-monster shredding the flesh from my thigh-bones.

COLUM (*lifting the jug of water*)

Don't be trembling now the way you'll have the milk spilt or the loaf slopping into it . . . for it's you must be making those offerings while I do be throwing in the hearth-fire and the well-water. . . . (*He goes forward and begins to wade into the sea.*)

MICHAEL (*following fearfully*)

Oh, Colum! It's not into the sea itself you'll have me going this night! (*He halts at the edge of the rocks.*) Surely now, it will be as fine an offering and me keeping to dry land!

COLUM (*still moving out into the sea*)

It's to yonder rock I'm going . . . but let you stay on the foreshore if you're so fearful.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

. . . (*He climbs up on a jutting head of rock to the right, holding the torch high.*) Mind the words you're to say now, for it's about to begin I am. (*Waving the torch thrice around his head he flings it out into the sea, crying:*) *A Dhe na mara* here's fire for you!

MICHAEL (*in a trembling voice, pouring milk into the sea*)

Here's kindly milk for you!

COLUM (*pouring out the well-water*)

Here's sweet well-water for you!

MICHAEL (*throwing in the little loaf of bread*)

Peace to your hunger!

COLUM

Peace to your hunger and let you not be coming for me till I've eaten my fill of the joy of life, and drunk of its sweetness like honey ale!

(*As Colum finishes speaking, a wave slaps the rock on which he stands and the foam from it tosses high in the air about him.*)

MICHAEL (*in great fear*)

Come back! Come back! It's hungry the sea is still. . . . It's reaching after you it is! There's no peace at all to its hunger! Let you come back, Colum! Let you come back!

COLUM (*laughing*)

Sure it was to thank me for the fire and sweet-water and milk and bread, it did be coming after me! Sure, it's proud I am to have a touch of its might on me in friendship.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

(As he speaks, a wave, bigger than the first, rushes up around him, and leaves on the rock behind him a mass of shining crimson.)

COLUM *(laughing again, exultantly)*

O High King of the sea! . . . It's pleased you are with me surely!

MICHAEL *(with a cry of terror)*

The crimson cloak! The sea-woman's cloak!
. . . . Behind you! Behind you!

(Colum whirls quickly and bends as if to take it up.)

MICHAEL

Do not be touching it, in God's name! Come down with you! Do not be even looking at it!

COLUM *(staring down at the brilliant cloak)*

It's never madder nor stone-crop surely was after giving *that* cloak its red!

MICHAEL *(in an agony, crossing himself then making the sign in the air towards Colum)*

Cross yourself and call God between you and harm!

COLUM *(still staring as if spellbound at the cloak)*

It does be shining brighter than the silks or satins. . . . A web from a foreign land I wouldn't wonder. . . .

MICHAEL

Leave off staring at it, for the love of Mary! Come back to me! . . .

COLUM

I wouldn't be wondering and it the royal cloak of a Queen of India, and she drowned in her

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

state voyaging to visit the High Queen at Windsor! (*Stooping and touching it.*)

MICHAEL

Leave it be! Leave it be! It's a thing of evil!
It's a sea-woman's cloak it is, and she will be
following after you and drowning you in her
love like a cold wave!

COLUM (*seizing the cloak in both hands and shaking
it out with a reckless gesture*)

Sure then it's keeping it I'll be, and me curious
to know the love of a sea-woman!

MICHAEL

Oh! . . . Oh! . . . God pity you!

COLUM (*more and more reckless, waving the shining
red cloak like a signal toward the sea*)

Let you be looking daughter of the sea! . . .
Let you be looking this way, for Colum Dara
has your crimson cloak, and it's Colum Dara
will be keeping it, and it's you will be following
after him to be his mate and comrade!

(*A wild, musical wailing as of three or four
women's voices, but without words, rises and
falls far away.*)

MICHAEL (*crying out*)

Oh! It's coming after him they are! . . .
Colum! Colum! Hark to that and run for
your soul! Oh, it's away in his head he is!

COLUM

Sea-woman! Sea-woman! Let you be coming
after your fine cloak, for it's never more the
waves will bring it to you! It's only in my
arms you will be finding it!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

MICHAEL (*wildly*)

It's for help I'm going! It's for strong men to pull you back from your dark will! (*He rushes to the rocks left, and scrambles up them crying as he does so:*) Holy Mary guard him till I'm back again! Holy Mary! Holy Mary! (*He clambers up out of sight gasping and sobbing his prayer.*)

COLUM (*in an ecstasy of bravado, waving the cloak seaward again*)

Sea-woman! Sea-woman! It's I, Colum, son of Eamon, is your master. It's I hold your crimson cloak for good or ill! It's I hold your wild will in the folds of it! Let you be answering the call of the man is your master! Come to me! Come to me!

(*The Sea-women's voices nearer, keening out a name: "Ganoré! Ganoré! Ganoré!"*)

COLUM (*startled*)

It's one only I called. . . . But it's a shoal of them surely is coming after me. . . . (*He hesitates as if half minded to spring shoreward from the rocks.*)

THE SEA-WOMEN'S VOICES (*still nearer*)

Ganoré! Ganoré! Ganoré!

COLUM

It's after dragging me to the deeps they'll be! (*He flings the cloak over his shoulder, and leaps from the high rock to a lower one and so to the foreshore at left. As he alights he turns and calls out again over the sea:*) Sea-woman! . . .

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

You of my choice. . . . You of the red
cloak! . . . Let you follow me to dry land!

THE VOICE OF GANORÉ (*speaking from the water
behind the rock on which Colum has been standing*)

Let you be wary of sorrow, O son of the ebbing!
Let you be wary of sorrow that comes on the
waters!

COLUM (*awed, but determined*)

I would be seeing your face, if it's the match
to your voice is sweeter than the birds of
Eden, O Woman of the Sea!

THE VOICE OF GANORÉ

Do not be longing to look on my face, Colum
Dara!

Do not be longing to look on my face to your
sorrow!

COLUM (*defiantly*)

Sorrow may look to itself! It's you I'd look on!
. . . By your crimson cloak is in my two
hands, let you appear to me!

*(The sky suddenly darkens, there is a flash of
lightning and a roll of thunder. When it passes
Ganoré is seen, tall and beautiful, upon the rock
where Colum has been standing a moment gone.
Her dress is of a pale, watery green and clings to
her in thin, shining folds; her long, gold-red hair
is looped with pearls and little shells like flowers.
As she rises to her height, the Voices of the Sea-
women break forth again in their keening wail,
more desolate and wild than ever.)*

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

VOICES OF THE SEA-WOMEN

Ganoré! Ganoré! Ganoré! Woe, woe to
Ganoré!

GANORÉ

I am Ganoré, a daughter of Lîr, and his darling,
I am the sister of Manannan Prince of the Ocean,
Let you be wary of wrath that is dark and un-
swerving.

COLUM (*gazing at her in love and worship*)

It is Lady Helen, Star of Beauty you are surely,
and it's from Troy Tower you leapt with a
magic leap into the far sea, to be cool and at
ease from the hot loves of men!

GANORÉ

Do not be tempting the wrath of the Gods of
the Waters.

Let you be tossing me over my mantle of
crimson,

Only for laughter I flung it, for proving your
valour,

Now it's returning I'd be to my sorrowful sisters!

COLUM

Is it I, have drawn the chief pearl was in the
crown of Lîr, from the dark depths of the sea,
would be flinging it back again? Let you
follow me, Princess of the Sea! Let you follow
me to the green earth is sweet and dry for loving!
Let you follow me to be my mate and comrade,
and take your fill of love in the warm arms of a
mortal man!

GANORÉ

Dread is the wrath of the Gods are as old as
the world is,

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

Knowing not pity or turning and endless forever.
Let you go back to your God that is youthful
and tender,
Let you return to the merciful God of the
Christians;
Yield me my mantle of crimson and Lîr will
forgive you!

COLUM

It's you I'm wanting more than the friendship
of any god at all, and it's not I am looking for
Lîr to forgive me, and I taking away his chief
treasure and a jewel was a god's! So let you
not stand there longer on your two small feet I
could warm in the hollow of one hand,—but
let you follow on them to the joy will be ours
this night! (*He turns and takes a stride or two
into the cave, looking over his shoulder to see if
she is following him.*)

GANORÉ

Woe for the arrow was sped on a feather of
laughter!
Woe for Ganoré,—her laughter is finished
forever!
Woe for the mortal she follows for peril and
sorrow!

COLUM

Let you be hastening, Lady Ganoré! Let you
be coming quickly! It's I, your lover and
master, bid you cease lamenting and follow
me! (*He waves her forward with the red cloak.*)

GANORÉ (*following as if drawn, in spite of herself
but looking back toward the sea*)

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

A Dhe na mara! Remember . . . Remember
Ganoré!

COLUM (*beginning to climb the rocks to left*)

Follow me! Follow me!

GANORÉ (*going proud and stately after him up the
rocky path*)

Woe and Ganoré will follow you surely forever!

CURTAIN

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

THE SECOND ACT

Scene: The kitchen in Cathleen Dara's cottage. A turf-fire is smouldering on the hearth. The room is tidy, though nets, oilskins, etc., hang on the walls. A door, with small windows on either side, opens to the sea. The door is on the latch.

Cathleen sits near the hearth mending a net. A spinning-wheel stands near her. She is a small, thin woman, worn and anxious-looking. She sighs as she works at her mending, and her eyes go often to the door.

Sara Darcy taps at the door and pushes it further open at the same time, looking in. She is a handsome, flaunting girl, with sloe-black hair and eyes, a white skin and red, scornful lips.

SARA

Good evening to you, Widow Dara. Would it please you if I came along in for a snatch of chat?

CATHLEEN

It would surely, Sara, and a blessing before you. It's worn I am like a coarse thread through a fine needle with passing and repassing through my own thought.

SARA (*setting down on the table a small crock that she has been carrying*)

I seen Colum and Michael going down to the shore a while ago, so I told myself it was

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

lonesome you'd be, and old sorrows rising up maybe, to fret you.

CATHLEEN (*half to herself*)

It's never lying down they do be. . . .

SARA (*indicating the crock, pursuing her own train of thought*)

I was thinking too that a little cut of my fine honey would be welcome, and the boys returning with a late hunger on them . . . and Colum with a sweet tooth as big as the reef in Killyan Bay. . . .

CATHLEEN

Thank you kindly, Sara. (*Looking at her rather anxiously.*) And isn't it the queer thing now, how you do be having Colum and his outer and inner ways by heart?

SARA (*bridling*)

Sure, and I don't see anything queer in it at all, and he singing tunes of himself in my ears from morn till night!

CATHLEEN

Do not be taking it bad, Sara. It was only wondering within myself I was, at the strange ways of life, makes a girl draw to a man is wild like Colum, and Michael there beside him all the time, gentle as the young St. John in a picture, and handsomer to look on.

SARA (*with a scornful laugh*)

Michael is it! . . . Michael that's so fearful of women he'd be racing back through the door of heaven, if the Holy Virgin did be only saying, "God save you," to him. . . . Michael

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

indeed! (*She controls herself suddenly, and drawing up a stool says in another tone:*) Let me help you with the mending now, and your pardon for me losing my temper on you.

CATHLEEN

There's no pardon needed at all. It's welcome indeed you are to help me.

SARA (*after a pause, during which the two women work silently, taking her hands from the net, and looking at the other with a keen, hard look*)

Let you talk out plain to me, Widow Dara. Is it some grudge you have against me that you're not wanting Colum to be my beau?

CATHLEEN (*nervous and placating*)

It is no complaint I have against you at all, Sara Darcy . . . it's only the old trouble of my own youth does be rising up against me, whenever I think of Colum and how in my wicked ignorance I waved him in the ebb of the tide! (*She begins to rock herself and moan softly.*) Oh, ochone! 'Twas I, his own mother, did take him down to the foreshore and he but three weeks in this bitter world. . . . 'Twas I, Cathleen Dara, did dip my helpless boy in the ebb-tide, and sign him to the power of the hungry sea! Oh, ochone! ochone!

SARA

Do not be crying and lamenting for a thing the like of that, Widow Dara, and you a Christian woman! . . . Wasn't it himself was signed also with holy water by a priest of God?

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

CATHLEEN (*looking down wide-eyed through her tears at the net across her knees, and plucking at it softly*)

It's this is the net caught his father's feet, and the mackerel just risen on a still night . . . it's these very meshes did be sliding back over the boat's side into the ebb and my man with them. . . . My man, Eamon Dara, that was also waved in the ebb-tide by his mother, and she in her dark ignorance the like of me! . . . Surely I thanked God when you came through my door this night, Sara Darcy, for I was sitting here, and watching the sea flowing through these meshes, and the white bones of my man stirring among them. . . .

SARA

For the love of Mary! Let you quit such fearful talk! It's tempting God you are, and He's easy tempted I've heard tell!

CATHLEEN

It's only a mother could be understanding me. . . .

SARA (*more curtly and insinuatingly*)

Surely now it's glad you should be and Colum marrying with a likely, frolicsome woman would be looking after him and putting her power against the power of the sea.

CATHLEEN (*with growing excitement*)

It's not you that I have anything against . . . but it's that I wouldn't be wanting Colum to marry with any island woman and she a Queen with a gold crown on her head!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

SARA (*with choked anger*)

And why is it that distracted notion has you,
I'd like to know!

CATHLEEN (*eagerly*)

I'd have him go far inland from the sea . . .
Sara Darcy! I'd have him dwell upon a high
mountain the way he'd never be smelling a
salt smell, nor having the noise of the sea roaring
about him even in sleep!

SARA (*her anger flaming*)

It's a queer sort of love for him you have surely,
and you wishing him far away on a high hill-
top!

CATHLEEN (*with quiet dignity*)

And it's easy to be seen you've never had a
child, Sara Darcy, or you'd know the love is
greater than your own wish. . . .

SARA (*tossing her head scornfully*)

It's I, maybe, will show you a love is greater
than yours! Let Colum put a ring on me before
the altar, and it's I will be making derision of
the sea, and tossing it my wedding nosegay for
to show my scorn of it!

CATHLEEN

Let you whisht. It's not such talk I'm liking
to hear under this roof.

SARA (*defiantly*)

I'd not be fearful the like of you and a sea-
woman shrieking for him at the door herself!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

(Colum thrusts open the door and stands upon the threshold. Ganoré, who is behind him, is hidden by his figure. He hesitates to enter for a little, on seeing Sara.)

SARA (*jumping up eagerly at sight of him*)

A late good-evening to you Colum! (*Reaching her hand toward the honey.*) I'm after keeping your Ma company, and bringing you a . . . (*She breaks off short, catching sight of Ganoré as Colum comes farther forward.*) Glory be! What's that beyond?

COLUM

I was thinking to find my mother alone with herself. . . . (*He steps aside, evidently at a loss for the moment, and half turns toward Ganoré, with a gesture of deprecation and welcome.*)

(Ganoré comes slowly forward for a few paces and then stands still and stately, gazing out before her as to a great distance, with quiet eyes. Cathleen Dara has risen slowly and tremblingly at the first glimpse of her, and now stands holding by the back of her chair, her eyes fixed as if spellbound upon Ganoré.)

CATHLEEN (*in a low, hushed voice*)

Is it Cathleen Ni Houlihan you are itself, lady, in your green robes and the shadow from your crown of sorrows in your eyes?

COLUM (*hastily, to his mother*)

Whisht now . . . I'll be telling you the whole story in two min utes or three. . . .

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

(To Ganoré, dragging forward a high-backed foreign chair of carved wood that has evidently drifted ashore from some wrecked ship.) Let you take your rest, lady honey, in this chair was maybe some great Earl's and his ship splintered on the crags of Ireland.

(Ganoré seats herself on the chair as if on a throne, still looking out in front of her, and Colum fetches his mother's footstool and slips it under her feet.)

SARA *(who has been looking on in sullen fury gives a sudden cry, pointing at Ganoré's bare feet)*

Look at the two feet of her naked to the world! *(She laughs derisively.)* "Lady honey!" Lady dirt-of-the-road, more like, and she rambling on her bare feet in the butt of the night!

(Ganoré takes no notice of this whatever, and Cathleen still gazes upon her, her hands clasped in a tense, rapt way.)

COLUM *(angrily to Sara)*

Keep a clean tongue in your teeth or quit off from here!

SARA

A clean tongue is it? *(She laughs as before.)*
It's not cleaning it I'd be on the like of her!

COLUM *(so savagely, that she subsides for the moment)*

Whisht, I'm saying! *(To his mother.)* It's a tale of seven wonders I'll be telling you mother, for it's no less than a King's daughter I've salvaged from the sea this night, and she bound

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

with cords to a mast did be drifting in on the flow and knocking among the crags at my feet. . . . Praise luck the sea was quiet! . . . (*Whispering.*) It's the anguish and terrors she's been after enduring has her mazed the way she'll not be talking any more, save only a stray word now and then. . . .

(*Sara titters on hearing this speech, and pretends to be muffling her scornful amusement in her shawl.*)

CATHLEEN (*still gazing, rapt, at Ganoré*)

A King's daughter. . . . It's a Queen itself she seems!

SARA (*unable to repress her spleen and jealous rage any longer*)

A Queen is it! . . . A King's daughter! . . . Sure, isn't it me that has the blood of the Spanish nobility pulsing through me, would know a Queen or a King's daughter when I seen her? A fine Queen that is will go rambling the world in a green shift thin as a mist of rain, and nothing between it and the shiny skin of her but the air of God!

COLUM (*taking a fierce step towards her*)

Will you whisht or will I make you? You and your evil spite and your Spanish blood could be squeezed from a turnip!

SARA

Let you not sneer at my Spanish blood was coming to me from the wrecking of a mighty fleet is written down in history, and you talking

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

of a Queen was riding ashore to you on a kippeen
rent from a single ship only!

COLUM

And so she did!

SARA (*jeeringly*)

Indeed! I'm thinking it's little of anything folk
could be seeing in that one yonder, but a wander-
ing play-woman, and she dressed up in her
gewgaws for to be snaring the hearts of idiots
in a wayside show!

COLUM (*furiously*)

Take yourself off out of this!

SARA (*almost beside herself*)

Take myself off, is it? . . . And how was it
you weren't after taking your lips off from
mine, this morning past, till you had me hard
put to get my breath at all? . . . Take myself
off, you're saying? And you, raving love at me
since Beltaine, and calling on the Saints to
witness it, till it was squirming on their golden
chairs with bashfulness they were, and they
holy bachelors vowed since birth against the
pleasures of the flesh!

COLUM (*aghast and overcome with shame before
Ganoré, who sits unmoved and unmoving as before
in the carved chair, does not know what course
would be best to take with the raging woman, but
he tries a softer tone*)

Have sense now Sara. . . . It's sorry you'll
be for this, come tomorrow. . . . Sure now,
a woman should leave herself some tatters of
reason to hide her naked heart from the
world. . . .

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

SARA

Do not be naming my heart to me and it with the bloody print of your teeth in it! Is it me you'll be turning out at the door, and inviting in a Jezebel was straying the road to hell on her bare feet?

(Cathleen, withdrawing her eyes from Ganoré, passes her hand over her face as if waking from sleep, and looks at Sara and Colum.)

SARA *(more wildly than ever)*

It's my curse I'll be putting on you, Colum Dara! . . . on your in-coming and your out-going, on your rising up and . . .

CATHLEEN *(starting from her trance, reaches Sara and pulls down her lifted hand. Transfigured by her greater love)*

Let you not curse my son, Sara Darcy, lest the mother's curse go out from my mouth upon you . . . the curse that is next to God's in power for destruction!

SARA *(sullenly, wrenching away her arms)*

Leave me go!

(Michael bursts into the room, white and haggard, his eyes wide with grief and fear.)

MICHAEL

Oh, Mother! God help us! . . . *(He breaks off short, staring with a sort of stupefied horror at Colum and Ganoré.)*

COLUM *(relieved at this interruption, going up to Michael, who retreats a little before him)*

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

What ails you now, to be staring the like of a dead fish? Isn't it you've ever seen a lady before now rescued from the sea?

MICHAEL (*gaping at Ganoré, in terror, with a faint voice*)

Rescued? . . .

COLUM (*with meaning*)

Ay, rescued I was saying. . . . Washed up on the foreshore corded to a length of wood was the mast of a wrecked ship. . . . (*With still more meaning.*) Show your manners now, and put a welcome before her.

(*Michael as if magnetized takes a step toward Ganoré, then retreats with a cry and rushes over to his mother's side.*)

MICHAEL (*piteously*)

I couldn't do that, Colum. . . . I couldn't do that and you took a rope's end to me. . . .

CATHLEEN (*her hand soothing Michael's shoulder*)

Let you not be cross, Colum. . . . (*To Ganoré.*) Let you not be taking it amiss, Lady Princess. . . . I was frightened before his birth and my fear passed into him the way he's fearful by nature.

(*Sara stands sullenly by the spinning-wheel and begins to turn it with one finger, staring with pent rage at the whirling spokes as if contemptuous of the other people in the room, but one can see that she is listening keenly to all that passes. There is a*

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

noise outside of many feet, and a low murmur of suppressed keening.)

COLUM (*starting forward*)

What and all can that be now?

(The door is pushed open and a Priest stands on the threshold. There is a little Crowd of Men and Women behind him.)

THE PRIEST (*lifting one hand in benediction and speaking solemnly*)

The compassion of God Almighty on this afflicted house and all in it! (*He stops short, his hand still lifted, staring at Colum much as Michael did a few moments ago.*) Is it you standing there, Colum Dara, in the pride of life and dry as a bone, and I after thinking you in the bowels of the sea?

(The Crowd begins to press forward chattering excitedly.)

VOICES FROM THE CROWD

Glory be! It's himself surely! Not a wet thread on him at all! It's a lively corpse he is indeed! What ailed Michael to be shrieking lies over us in the dead of night? It's I'll be learning that lad a lesson! It's a good skelping he should get! . . . It's what he'll get from me surely!

THE PRIEST (*to the crowd behind him*)

Hold your clamour now! I've a word or two to say myself. (*To Michael.*) It's small wonder you'd be after crawling beneath your Mama's petticoat and you ramping through the village,

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

roaring out how Colum was struck with madness on a crag in the sea, the way you had our sleep scattered to the four winds, and we racing down to the shore to save him from a watery grave! (*More and more indignant, advancing on Michael.*) And you letting a howl of lamentation out of you when he wasn't found, would be having a Banshee mortified. It's I'll learn you not to play your pranks on a Priest of God!

(*The People crowd about the door without coming in, laughing and watching the priest and Michael.*)

MICHAEL (*in great fear*)

Oh, don't let him get at me! . . . Don't give me up to him, for the love of Mary!

CATHLEEN

Have patience, your reverence. . . . Sure it's no lies the boy meant to be telling at all. . . . It was in terror he was for Colum and he out in the sea salvaging the lady yonder. . . . (*She points at Ganoré.*)

THE PRIEST (*turning quickly and seeing Ganoré for the first time, seated still and stately in the big chair*)

God save us! Who is she at all?

(*The People press in now past the open door, and gape at Ganoré, muttering and wondering among themselves.*)

COLUM

It's a King's daughter she is, your reverence, and her royal father's ship after bursting

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

asunder in a storm; the way she did be drifting about three days and more on a bit of spar. (*Sara titters audibly. With an angry glance at her.*) I'll ask your reverence kindly to put the fear of God on Sara Darcy, the way she'll show some manners to a poor, princely lady has been shipwrecked in great distress.

SARA (*pert and defiant*)

Sure, your reverence, how would I be holding back a laugh at that tale?

THE PRIEST (*severely*)

Keep your tongue between your teeth, Sara Darcy, till you're spoken to! (*He turns to Ganoré.*) A welcome before you, royal lady, and what name is it your royal father is called by?

GANORÉ

Sacred his name is and not to be spoken to Christians.

THE PRIEST (*recoiling*)

The God of Christ and his Angels protect us!

(*The Crowd scowls and mutters.*)

THE PRIEST

Is it a heathen princess she is? (*To Colum.*) Or is it her mind is straying from her many hardships, poor soul?

COLUM

She's a little away in her head, your reverence, and small wonder, when you'll think on what has happened her! . . .

THE PRIEST (*interrupting him*)

Maybe it's nourishment she's wanting. (*To*

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

Cathleen.) Have you offered food to her,
Widow Dara?

CATHLEEN

I was thinking to do so when you came in upon
us, your reverence.

THE PRIEST

Let you do it now, then.

CATHLEEN (*going nearer to Ganoré*)

Could you be taking a sup of sweet milk, lady,
and bread with honey?

*(Sara snatches the honey from the table, and puts
it under her shawl.)*

GANORÉ

Bread and sweet milk have I had to my supper
already;

Well-water, too, have I drunk of, and fire from
the hearthstone.

THE PRIEST (*starting back again and breaking in
on her*)

Fire! . . . Is it fire you're saying you drank?

GANORÉ

Fire is the rarest and sweetest . . . the fire
of the hearthstone.

THE PRIEST (*to Colum and Cathleen, tapping his
forehead significantly*)

It's demented she is entirely, poor lady. I'm
thinking it's a hard work will be ours, writing
and sending messages to the High Parliament
and the Ministers of the Queen for to have
them shift the royal burden of her to the noble
shoulders should be bearing it. . . .

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

COLUM (*aghast at this turn*)

Sure, your reverence, it isn't the High Government of England would be willing to have the care of a crazy Princess and she safe ashore on the coast of Ireland . . . and a home offered her by me, (*he looks appealingly at Cathleen*) and my mother.

THE PRIEST

It's not fitting or decent at all that a King's daughter should be taken into a fisherman's cabin the like of a stray kitten or a young solander fallen to the rocks. A King's daughter should be . . .

SARA (*breaking out again*)

For God's love, your reverence! Let me be speaking a word now! . . . It's wild I am entirely and a learned man your like swallowing the bait in this shameless story, hook and all! . . .

THE PRIEST

What's that you're saying to me, Sara Darcy? Mind now, or I'll put a penance on you'll be making your tongue sore and your knees with it!

SARA (*desperately*)

I'd liefer speak and have the penance! . . . Sure now,—take a good look at her, and the naked feet of her, and her bosom bared before a Priest of God!

(*Ganoré slowly covers her breast with a width of her magnificent hair.*)

THE PRIEST (*stealing a glance at Ganoré, then looking away quickly. To Sara*)

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

Shame to you, and your wicked tongue! . . .
Fifty "Paters" and a hundred "Aves", and . . .

SARA (*breaking in and advancing toward Ganoré*)
Look at her if it's a King's daughter she is, and
her hair rampaging down her back, and it
strewn with trash a decent woman would be
sweeping to the dunghill, and . . .

COLUM (*pushing her back*)
Whisht! or I'll fling yourself on the dunghill!

THE PRIEST

Shame on the low speech of both of you. . . .
(*Sara makes a little rush forward.*) Get back
there, Sara Darcy! . . . Is it pining for the
madhouse you are?

SARA (*wildly*)

Let me get at her! . . . I'll leave scratches
on her brassy face will show if her blood's a
finer red than mine is! (*She breaks from the
Priest and rushes at Ganoré. Colum leaps after
her and catches her by a fold of her dress.*)

COLUM (*struggling with her*)

It's possessed of a devil she is! (*To Sara.*)
Leave off now. . . . Leave off your con-
tortions I'm saying. . . .

THE PRIEST

Leave off, Sara Darcy! . . . Is it you will be
disobeying the word of God! . . . Quiet
now. . . .

COLUM (*to the others*)

Some of you lend a hand, for God's sake! It's
ten devils is in her! (*Two or three come forward*)

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

hesitatingly.) Tim Pheaty, it's a strong man you are, grab her arm next you. . . .

(Pheaty does so, and Sara darts down her head and bites his hand.)

PHEATY *(shaking his hand and sucking it)*

Oh! Oh! She has me bit to the bone! There's a piece out of my hand the size of a shilling. . . .

(Suddenly Sara manages to unfasten her shawl, and Colum staggers back with it in his hand. The girl, half crazy with rage and excitement, rushes at Ganoré, but Ganoré, rising for the first time, holds out her hand against her and Sara stops as if turned to stone. Then Ganoré turns where she stands and waves her hand toward the moonlit sea visible through the open cottage window behind her.)

GANORÉ *(calling in a clear, musical voice like chanting)*

A Dhe na mara! Ganoré, Ganoré is calling!

(The sky and sea darken suddenly, lightning plays over them, and there comes a low mutter of thunder. A huge wild-swan beats with his wings against the window, its breast and pinions illuminated by the light within. At the same time there is a long, shrill screaming without, as of women's voices. Then a sudden gust of wind shakes the house, and there comes the crash of a wave against the door. A second later and a foam-marbled tongue of sea-water crawls forward across the threshold into the room.)

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

THE CROWD (*huddling together and crying out*)

God save us! Holy Mary protect us! It's the Day of Judgment is here! Look at the sea coming in at us! There! There! Beneath the door! It's I am a lost sinner! (*To the Priest.*) Pray for us! Pray for us!

(*The Priest murmurs a prayer in Latin.*)

MICHAEL (*suddenly rushing forward and throwing himself at the Priest's feet, clasping his knees*) I'll confess! I'll confess everything! Only be saving Colum, your reverence, and I'll confess!

(*The darkness, and the lightning and thunder have died away. The moonlit sea shines beyond the window as before. Only the tongue of foamy sea-water spreads slowly along the floor. Ganoré has resumed her queenly state in the big chair and sits still again.*)

THE PRIEST

Make your confession, Michael Dara. It's with God only to save your brother, but it's better his chance will be, and you confessing all.

COLUM (*somewhat shaken himself, and speaking in a low voice*)

It's mad with terror the poor boy is. Do not be giving heed to what he'll be raving, your reverence.

THE PRIEST (*sternly to Colum*)

Silence, Colum Dara! There's things here I'm not liking at all. Let your brother make his confession before God in the presence of the people.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

MICHAEL (*sobbing and incoherent*)

We did be going down to the sea this night for to make an offering to it after the ancient custom.

THE PRIEST

Now God forgive you! . . . But go on . . . for great is His mercy, and you telling the hard truth. . . . Go on, I'm saying. . . .

MICHAEL

Bread and milk we did be throwing to it, and well-water and a fagot from the hearth. (*The Priest turns involuntarily and looks at Ganoré. She smiles for the first time with infinite scorn.*) Colum did be wading out up to his middle, but fear had me the way I stayed on shore. . . . Then I seen Colum climbing onto a white rock, and he swinging the fiery fagot about his head . . . and calling out strange words . . . and casting it into the sea. . . . (*He breaks off, shuddering.*)

THE PRIEST

Go on and God will forgive you.

MICHAEL (*piteously*)

Let you be putting your hand on me, your reverence, the way I'll feel God is near me. . . .

THE PRIEST (*kindly, laying his hand on Michael's head*)

Go on, my poor boy.

MICHAEL

I seen a bright thing the like of a silky red sail washing up on the rock behind him . . . and the water spreading it out round his feet, and

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

then I was knowing surely what it was. . . .
(*He breaks off again.*)

THE PRIEST

And what was it, in God's name?

MICHAEL

'Twas a sea-woman's cloak it was! (*The Priest crosses himself, the crowd murmur and exclaim, crossing themselves also.*) 'Twas a sea-woman's cloak it was surely! (*He twists himself about suddenly, still clinging to the Priest, and points at Ganoré.*) And there she sits that owns it!

(*The Crowd press back towards the door in terror, muttering. All stare at Ganoré. Colum steps towards her as if to shield her.*)

VOICES FROM THE CROWD

A sea-woman! Holy Virgin, protect us! A sea-woman! St. Paidric, save us! That was in it and the sea coming after us! It's evil I was feeling near me! It's evil magic is here, surely! Look at the wild eyes of her! . . . Look at the cold watery evil is in her glare!

THE PRIEST (*to the crowd*)

Be silent, in God's name! (*To Michael.*) What is this unholy story you're after telling me? Is it a pack of lies you'd be hurling in the face of Heaven?

MICHAEL

It's no lies at all I'm telling! I swear by the Holy Virgin it's truth every word! Give me absolution, for the love of the Saints!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

THE PRIEST (*turning, sternly to Ganoré*)

In the name of Almighty God, who is it you are?

GANORÉ (*rising to her height*)

I am Ganoré, a daughter of Lîr and his dearest,
I am the sister of Manannan, Prince of the Ocean.

VOICES FROM THE CROWD

Show her the cross, your reverence! Put the sign of the cross upon her!

(The Priest holds up toward Ganoré the gold cross that hangs about his neck, and repeats an exorcism in Latin.)

GANORÉ (*proudly*)

Would I be fearing a god that is human and gentle,
I, that am daughter of Lîr was a god long before him?

THE PRIEST

It's blasphemy you're talking! Sea-witch or mortal woman, let you fear the wrath of heaven for our God is a consuming fire!

VOICES FROM THE CROWD

It's a blasphemer she is surely! The wrath of God will be falling on us for her wickedness! Let us pelt her I'm saying! Pelt her back into the sea she came from! Pelt her! pelt her!

COLUM (*catching up a boat hook from the wall and standing before Ganoré*)

The first of you puts forward foot or hand, I'll split to the gullet!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

THE PRIEST (*to Colum*)

Be quiet before I put the curse of Rome on you for a murderer! (*To the people.*) Let you be quiet too or I'll lay a malediction on the lot of you! (*To Colum.*) What's this story Michael was telling of a red cloak and where is it, if it's in it at all?

COLUM (*defiantly*)

It's where you'll not find it nor anybody else is living this day and place!

THE PRIEST

Is it an abomination you'd be in the nostrils of the Lord? Is it you would have me believe yonder creature is a sea-woman, and you holding her by the power of her red cloak you've stolen?

COLUM

Stolen or not, it's her red cloak I have and will keep to the Judgment Day!

THE PRIEST

It's the Judgment Day may be nearer to you than you think for!

SARA (*laughing shrilly in hysteria*)

It's the Judgment Day for fools is on the lot of you this minute! (*Pointing to Ganoré.*) A sea-woman! That hussy a sea-woman! She to be rising from the wet sea and not a shred on her isn't dryer than a new net has never been cast! Look at her, I'm saying! Look at her and she dry as a flame of hell!

(All stare at Ganoré and mutter among themselves. Sara is beside herself with triumph at the impression she has made.)

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

THE PRIEST (*gazing at Ganoré and speaking sarcastically*)

I'll be asking you kindly to explain the dryness is on you, and you the daughter of an old sea-god was long since knocked on the head by St. Colomb.

GANORÉ

How would the ocean be wetting the people that rule it?

Your God is fire you were saying, will fire then consume Him?

THE PRIEST (*with indignation*)

It's enough sacrilege I've heard from you entirely. (*To Colum.*) Let you be giving her her cloak, and turning her from the door like a Christian man!

COLUM (*holding out his right hand*)

May this hand shrivel on me, if ever it lift the latch of my door against her!

THE PRIEST

Is it defying me you are? Is it you are defying the Church of Rome and the Holy Father are represented in my person?

COLUM

If ever I turn her from my door, may St. Peter turn me from the door of heaven!

THE PRIEST

The door of heaven is it? Poor fool! Are you getting no smell of scorching and the door of hell gaping for you? Put her out, or it's I will put the ban of the Church upon you!

COLUM

Let you put the ban of the Church upon me

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

all you like, but it's never the ban of shame I'll be putting upon her!

THE PRIEST

I have warned you three times, Colum Dara, and I not known for my patience! Let you cast that woman from your house, or let you prepare to face the ban of Rome!

COLUM

It's I would be liefer having her and the ban with her, than sit on the throne next St. Paidric's without her!

(The Priest lifts his hand to recite the Anathema against Colum and begins to speak in Latin.)

CATHLEEN *(rushing to him and clasping his knees)*

Let you put the ban upon *me*, holy Father! Let you put it upon me! It's I could be bearing it better, and me an old woman is used with sorrow! . . .

THE PRIEST *(trying to raise her)*

What has you, Widow Dara? Rise up on your feet. . . . It's away in your head you are. . . .

CATHLEEN *(refusing to rise and clinging to him)*

It's in my full senses I am entirely, ochone! Sure, how would heaven be lacking in glory and one old woman less in it? Let you be sparing Colum and putting the ban on me!

THE PRIEST *(forces her to rise)*

How could I put the ban on you, and you a good, Christian soul, and a true follower of the Son of Mary?

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

CATHLEEN (*wildly*)

If I'll deny *her* Son, will you save *my* son?
Will you put the ban upon me then?

THE PRIEST (*to the people who are muttering again*)

It's her grief has her distracted. (*To Michael.*)
Let you be holding your mother up and comforting her.

MICHAEL (*comes forward and puts his arm around his mother*)

Be quiet now, mother! Take comfort. . . .
Sure I am your son also. . . .

CATHLEEN (*struggling and crying out*)

Colum! My son! Son of my love! My firstborn!

(As Colum starts toward her, the Priest steps before him with lifted hand. Cathleen totters and sinks back swooning into the arms of the women who have gathered round her.)

THE PRIEST (*turning solemnly to Colum*)

For the last time, Colum Dara, in the name of the Almighty's compassionate mercy . . .
make your choice!

COLUM

My choice is the same last it was first, and will be ever.

(The people shudder and cross themselves.)

THE PRIEST

Then must I put the ban of Rome upon you, Colum Dara. From this day forth let you dwell apart from all men, let your labours be done in loneliness and your bread eaten in

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

bitterness. Let tears and ashes of repentance be your portion, and let you not be craving succour from God or Saints or the Holy Mother of Christ, for it's deaf they'll be to your pleading, and no man may have pity on your torments! (*He pronounces solemnly in Latin the words of excommunication.*)

(*Colum stands unflinching, while the sonorous words roll over him, his hand on the arm of the chair on which Ganoré is seated.*)

THE PRIEST (*to the people*)

Let all be going from under this roof that has the Anathema of God upon it. (*To Michael who is supporting Cathleen.*) Do you lead out your poor mother, Michael Dara.

MICHAEL (*to Colum*)

God's pity on you, brother. It's broke my heart is that we part so, and it maybe my fault.

COLUM

I'm not faulting you for it, brother. Let you be easy and a long life of joy to you.

(*The little crowd moves out in awed silence, but when Michael tries to draw his mother after them she stops and turns, holding out her arms to Colum.*)

CATHLEEN

It was a hard birth I had with you, pulse of my heart! But it's a pang sharper than the birth-pang is tearing you from me this day, and it's more than the joy of loving you I'll have, when

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

my prayers and penances do be opening again
for you the doors of heaven!

COLUM (*in great sorrow, taking a step toward her*)
Mother! Let you forgive me, and God may be
doing as He pleases!

THE PRIEST (*taking Cathleen's arm and drawing her
out with him*)

Do not bring a curse upon the righteous by
speaking to them with a tongue is cursed of
God! (*He goes out, followed by Michael, and
closes the door.*)

COLUM (*after standing in gloomy silence staring at
it for a moment, turns back to Ganoré with a
reckless laugh*)

Sure, isn't it some words you'll be after throw-
ing to me, Sea-lady, and me having dared the
Church of Rome and the Mitred Pope for love
of you? (*Ganoré does not answer. Wheedlingly.*)
Sure now, it's only letting on to be bashful with
me you are, and me willing to pour out my blood
for your defence the like of another sea? . . .
And isn't it salty the blood of man is, like the
sea? Weren't you knowing it was Manannan-
Lîr did be casting a wave of the sea into the
hearts of men, the way they'd be ever loving it
and all that's in it? (*Going closer to her, and
speaking passionately, half drawing a knife from
his belt.*) Will you be having me wound myself
for love of you, the way you can be touching a
drop of my hot blood to your cold lips and tast-
ing the salt is in it?

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

GANORÉ (*coldly and proudly*)

What is your blood unto me that am owning a mantle

Dyed in the holy and magical blood of a Sea-God? . . .

Let you be yielding it up ere his anger destroy you!

COLUM (*striking the knife back into its sheath with a fierce gesture*)

Surely it's yourself heard me saying I'd never yield up that mantle till the day of Judgment, Sea-Lady! (*Coming closer to her and softening his voice.*) Will you be seeing a man give soul and body for love of you, and you not thinking to reward him? Sure it's your own heart should be lepping out to him in return! (*He catches her arm and holds it against his breast.*)

GANORÉ (*rising to her feet still cold and stately*)

Free are the hearts of the sea-people ever and always!

COLUM (*more recklessly than ever*)

Then sure if it's not your heart you'll be giving me, it's your soft, lovely body I'll be taking for my delight! . . . And it's I will carry you in my arms to the bride-bed, King's daughter! (*He snatches her up in his arms.*) And it's my love will be spread above it like the royal mantle of a King! (*He strides toward the inner room with her in his arms, and passes through the door.*)

VOICES OF THE SEA-WOMEN (*far out at sea*)

Ganoré! Ganoré! Ganoré! Woe! Woe for Ganoré!

CURTAIN

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

THE THIRD ACT

Scene: Kitchen of Dara's cottage as in Act II, twenty years later. The room is the same, but it has a forlorn, neglected look. A turf fire burns on the hearth, and at the table he has pulled out before it, Colum is kneading a cake with milk and flour and honey. He looks far older than his years, his blue flannel shirt is shrunken, patched clumsily in places, and with here and there a hole unmended. His hair is grey, and a grey beard covers the lower part of his face, but his eyebrows are still dark and his eyes even wilder and brighter than when he was young.

Ganoré stands with her back to the room gazing out of the window, left. Her long hair has turned silver white, and under her mantle of gold brocade shows her green robe. She stands as motionless as an image, her arms hanging down at her sides.

COLUM (*kneading the cake, and glancing at her from time to time, pausing between each sentence as if hoping for some sign or answer from Ganoré*) Isn't it a strange thing now, that I, a man, should be doing this woman's work, and all, too, that a woman who does never be helping me or giving me a sweet word, may have a sweet cake on Samhain. (*He takes up the kneaded cake and puts it in the pot-oven, heaping the sods around it, talking as he does so.*) Wouldn't you think now,

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

there'd be one heart-string in a woman, would answer to the like of that? Wouldn't you think it would be after rising her compassion to see a man the like of Colum Dara, was renowned for his gallous deeds and proud tempers, and he waiting round about her and serving her (*As he talks he goes to a press in one corner, and feeling far back takes out a stone jug of honey ale and sets it on the table*) like a chained slave for a score of years? (*He sets out a cheap, colored glass and a plate with flowers, and a knife and fork of silver. Then stands up and looks at Ganoré who has not stirred, his hands clenching at his sides.*) Sure now, it's a terrible thing and passing speech, to be banned for a woman and she after setting her own ban upon you also. It's a terrible lonesomeness, it is surely, to be cut off from your fellow creatures and your next and nighest, but it's nothing at all it is beside the lonesomeness does be eating your entrails and you together, with a woman does be shutting the doors of speech in your face, and sending her mind long journeys to places your thought can't be following after. It's but empty vanity it is beside the lonesomeness of the heart does be bleeding love a score of years for a heart is cold and barren as a wave of the sea. (*Pleadingly.*) Sure what is it I've left undone? What is it I've lacked toward you, that you cannot be showing me a small little kindness on Samhain after all these years gone by? (*Ganoré makes no sign, and with a sudden nervous snap of tension, he shrieks out.*) Let

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

you be answering me, woman, or it's a harm
I'll do myself and you also!

(Ganoré turns slowly and looks at him with her calm, changeless eyes. Her hair, bound with a twisted string of little shells, falls loose on either side of her face veiling it, she is very pale and mortality has breathed a dimness upon her.)

GANORÉ

Filled were my ears with the music of laughter
remembered;
Let you be telling me over the words you were
saying.

COLUM *(bursting into a tragic echo of his youthful, reckless laughter)*

Telling them over, is it? Tell over the drops of
heart's blood is Satan's rosary? Break open the
wet gap of a wound was dealt me by my own
hand long years gone by, the way you'll be after
sticking your little finger in it to see does it go
to the bone? *(He sinks overcome with wild
laughter, into the chair by the table, letting his head
fall finally on his outstretched arms, the laughter
subsiding into spent sobbing.)*

GANORÉ *(approaching and looking down on him
with a mild, aloof surprise)*

Strange are the sorrows of mortals, and stranger
their laughter;
Stranger the laughter is mingled of anger and
weeping.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

COLUM (*springing up in a sort of frenzy, and lifting his clenched hands above his head*)

Let you cease from your queer manner of speech is like the rocking of water, for it does be putting me beyond myself! It has me longing to take the white neck of you in my two hands and make you whisht forever!

GANORÉ (*gazing at him quietly*)

Surely your love and your hatred are one,
Colum Dara.

COLUM (*dashed and sobered*)

Why is it you're saying that now? Isn't it my love has been soft about you as the down about a nestling this score of years? Is it you have had the inner lining of my heart wrapped round you all that length of time would be mixing up a few flighty words with the wonder of love?

GANORÉ (*with a gesture of helpless non-comprehension*)

Empty the shuttle of words that is plying between us.

How shall a meaning be woven without understanding?

How shall I feel with your feeling, and I an immortal?

COLUM (*growing excited again*)

Immortal is it you're saying? . . . And you with your hair whitening along with mine! (*Laughing bitterly.*) I'm thinking your immortality was in that red cloak of yours that you'll never find again!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

GANORÉ

Death has no power to destroy me; your death
will release me;

Only so long as you live am I held unto bondage.

COLUM (*with a groan of pain*)

Have you no pity at all . . . you that have
lain in my arms, and felt the tears of my love
trickling among your hair?

GANORÉ (*with a noble, sweeping gesture, indicating
her body from head to foot*)

This you were holding in ravenous arms of a
lover!

I was afar on the musical, magical waters!

COLUM (*turning away with a gesture of reckless
despair*)

O Lord God Almighty! let you be sending me
forthwith to Hell, for it's less torment I'd have
in its flames than I do be having in the frozen
heart of a woman!

GANORÉ

This is the woe I foretold on the sorrowful
evening,

This is the sorrow that follows Ganoré forever.

COLUM (*wild with grief*)

Let you be listening to her winds and waves!
Let you be twisting with shame for her, all
creatures! Love has she had would save another
world, and she mocking it, and blowing upon it
with her icy breath the way she'd be blowing
out a holy candle! (*To Ganoré.*) Was it for
this I took your crimson cloak thinking to bind
you to me with love?

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

GANORÉ

None may be binding and not being bound,
Colum Dara.

COLUM (*desperately*)

Whisht! in the name of all the gods, good and evil! or it's dashing out my brains I'll be on the wall before you! (*He wipes the sweat of misery from his brow with the back of his arm, and turning goes to the hearth, and takes out the cake from the oven. Coming slowly back to the table with it, he sets it on a large platter, flowered like the little plate, and uncorking the jug of honey-ale, pours some into the glass. Then he draws forward the high, carved chair and places it at the table. Speaking in a different, subdued voice, almost timidly.*) Will it be pleasing you, King's daughter, to sit here and take a bite of this Samhain cake, and a sup of honey-ale?

GANORÉ (*drawing near, and looking down at the little supper he has laid for her; speaking somewhat sadly*)

All but the gift that is greatest you offer me kindly.

COLUM (*eagerly*)

And what is that greatest one? Be telling it to me, and you shall sleep on it this night for a pillow!

GANORÉ (*lifting her eyes to his*)

That is the gift of my freedom, the mantle of crimson.

COLUM (*entreatingly*)

Let you hold off a little, from wounding me with your soft tongue is yet harder than edged

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

iron. Let there be peace and kindness between us for this short time only. . . .

GANORÉ (*still standing by the chair he is holding for her*)

Why is no platter for you, and no glass for your drinking?

COLUM

There's a heaviness upon me the way I couldn't be talking sup or morsel and it the mead and manna of Heaven.

(*Ganoré seats herself, and taking the cake in her fingers breaks off a tiny portion and eats daintily, sipping once or twice the honey-ale. Colum watches her with a sort of rapture, seated opposite her, his hands folded on the empty place before him. Suddenly he stretches one hand toward her across the table and speaks low and pleadingly.*)

COLUM

Do not be mocking at me, but surely if it was the madness of my love in youth had you angered, it's the softness of my love now should be melting you . . . It's the hunger of love was on me then, but it's the thirst of love is on me now, the way I'm happy just to be looking on you. Couldn't you be giving me a sweet word? . . . Couldn't you be giving me that, when I've given up all of life for you? Surely I gave up my soul for you when I did be giving up my mother, for it's a man's mother is the right soul of him, oftener than not, I'm thinking. . . . Isn't it that same could be showing you the love you have from me? Isn't it now?

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

GANORÉ (*rising*)

How shall a prisoner believe in the love of a jailer?

Bring me my mantle of crimson and I will believe you.

COLUM (*with an angry, sullen gesture*)

Not till it's a shroud you're needing will I bring it to you! (*He begins clearing away the things from the table, scowling and miserable.*)

(*Ganoré goes quietly to the fireside where a rough frame of needlework is standing, and begins to embroider on the cloth stretched upon it. Having cleared the table, Colum stands before the fire, watching Ganoré from under his black, heavy brows.*)

COLUM (*speaking at last in a dull, lifeless voice*)

It's a queer notion you had surely, making me nail together that ancient looking bit of rub-bish . . . (*Lifting his head with sudden interest.*) Is it silks you've got there? . . . (*He goes nearer.*) Bunches of silks it is surely! Red, black and gold color! (*Suspiciously.*) And where were you after getting them, tell me kindly?

GANORÉ

Deep in the cavernous waters my sisters beheld them,

Borrowed the seeming of gannets to further my longing.

Brought me the mystical tresses of pitiful beauty . . .

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

This is the magical shroud I will have for my passing.

COLUM (*ironical and bitter*)

Little call you have to be talking of shrouds, and you immortal! (*He picks up a long length of golden floss from among the shaded silks hanging over Ganoré's embroidery frame, starts, then looks up at her dubiously.*) Silks were you saying? . . . It's more like they are to long locks of fine, silky hair . . . (*He continues gazing at her as if for an answer.*)

GANORÉ (*unmoved as ever*)

Always the sea people use for their royalest weaving,
Tresses of beautiful virgins, were drowned in their blossom.

COLUM (*recoiling from her in horror, and dashing the lock of golden hair to the ground*)

A fearful woman you are entirely! And your beauty a terror should be shaking the stars into a new pattern, and loosening the moon in its socket, and blackening the edges of the sun!

(*The door opens and Cathleen Dara stands on the threshold. She is dressed in coarse, dark weeds and a black cloth over her white hair. She is so shrunk and aged and worn with penance and fasting that she looks like a wistful ghost rather than a woman. Colum stands staring at her as though she were a ghost indeed. Ganoré turning her head to follow the look, also gazes at her,—then stands up also and withdraws a little so that she is half hidden by the tapestry frame.*)

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

CATHLEEN (*in a faint yet clear voice*)

The Pardon of God upon this house and all in it.

COLUM (*awed*)

It's dreaming I am . . . A dream of warning is upon me . . .

CATHLEEN

The pity of Mary, Mother of Sorrows, descend and rest upon this house . . .

COLUM (*as before*)

Is it her spirit it is? . . . Is it herself has risen from the dead to let me know my time is near?

CATHLEEN

Risen I am indeed . . . but only from the grave of lonely sorrow . . . (*She breaks into a low cry of yearning, long suppressed.*) O my son! My son! that had the glory of youth upon your brow when last I looked on you. . . . O my son! dearer far to me for the ashes of the sorrowful years upon you!

COLUM (*half whispering*)

Is it my mother's voice I'm hearing? . . . Is it no shadow speaking, but my mother living?

CATHLEEN (*tremblingly*)

Dead to all save sorrow I have been surely, but now I look on you, I live again, Colum, my son! (*She holds out her arms to him. He goes in silence slowly toward her, then sinks to his knees before her and bows his head. She puts her hand upon it, and lifts up her eyes to heaven.*) Praised be the King of Heaven and the Lord His Son for this hour! Praised and

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

blessed be Mary that knows the hearts of mothers and stoops to comfort them. A hundred blessings upon my son was dead to me, and is alive again . . . was lost to me, and is found! (*Then falls a silence, Colum kneeling still and bowed, Cathleen, her face lifted with closed eyes. She opens them at last, and speaks in a spent, faint voice.*) Let you rise now, darling . . . Let you rise and be giving me your arm to lean on, for it's not strong in anything I am but patience . . . (*Colum, still too moved to say anything supports her frail, little figure to the carved chair at the table. Cathleen shrinks back from it; then clinging still for support to Colum's arm, whispers.*) Where is it she is?

COLUM (*starting and glancing round, nods toward the tapestry frame, and says constrainedly*)

Yonder at the needlework.

CATHLEEN (*crossing herself as she looks round at Ganoré, and says in a low voice that trembles again*)

King's daughter . . .

GANORÉ (*with a stately gesture*)

Greeting and welcome before you, O mother of Colum.

CATHLEEN (*timidly*)

Thank you kindly, King's daughter. (*As if willing to placate Ganoré.*) That's a fine frame you have for the needlework surely, and lovely shiny silks for the filling . . . (*She takes a few steps toward Ganoré.*) Would you be letting me look on the thing it is you're figuring?

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

(Ganoré steps back a little from the frame and motions Cathleen to come forward with cold graciousness. Colum follows his mother uneasily, looking anxiously from her to Ganoré and back again.)

CATHLEEN *(looking at the cloth that Ganoré has been embroidering and shrinking a little, then trying to speak civilly, and even attempting a smile)*

Is it a garden of strange foreign plants it is, were growing in your father's kingdoms, princely lady?

GANORÉ

Under the sea is that garden and there is my longing.

CATHLEEN *(crossing herself furtively, but keeping up her brave touching show of courteous interest)*

It is wonders surely, you do be making with your needle and these fine silks . . . *(She puts out her hand as if to touch them. Colum seizes it and draws it back.)*

COLUM *(with horror and terror mingled in his voice)*

Let you not be touching those silks.

(Ganoré gives a scornful half-smile and takes up her needle again. As she does so the bell of the village church strikes eleven, then one to mark the half hour. Ganoré pauses again in her work and stands listening. As the last note dies away she comes forward into the room and stands looking at Colum.)

GANORÉ

This is the hour: Let you give me the barley and honey.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

(Colum goes to the corner press, and taking out a small measure of barley and a piece of honeycomb wrapped in cloth, gives them to her in silence. She accepts them, also in silence, and throwing a corner of her mantle over her head, goes to the door. As she is opening it the voices of the sea-women are heard without as in the first act.)

VOICES OF THE SEA-WOMEN

Ganoré! Ganoré! Ganoré!

(Three wild-swans sweep by the cottage window. As Ganoré opens the door and steps outside, they are seen circling over her head, against the starlit sky. She pulls to the door behind her and Colum and his mother are alone.)

CATHLEEN

The power of God between us and evil! . . .
What is it she is after doing?

COLUM

Do not be afeared. Every Samhain for the score of years is past, at midnight less the half hour, she does be doing the same thing. No harm will come to you at all.

CATHLEEN

Holy Virgin, protect us! . . . What is in it, and the wild swans that do be the wariest of all creation, flocking about her the like of pigeons?

COLUM *(looking at her queerly)*

It's mad you'd be thinking me if I was telling you that.

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

(Cathleen sinks into a chair as if her strength had failed her suddenly, and gazes up at him in distress. Colum makes a gesture as if throwing aside an intolerable burden and goes and kneels beside her, putting up his arms about her waist.)

COLUM *(with low, passionate intensity)*

Mother . . . Mother . . . Don't let us be speaking or thinking of her, or of any one but you and me in the whole world! . . . It's a saint of God you are, and the Priest himself telling it around. How is it you are coming to me, a man has the curse of the Church upon him?

CATHLEEN *(holding his upturned face in her small, trembling old hands)*

Be easy, darling. Father Nolan did be writing the whole story to the Court of Rome, and the Holy Father, may the splendour of Heaven shine upon him in this world and the next!— is after sending me dispensation, the way I could look upon your dear face again, after all these weariful years gone by!

COLUM

The splendour of Heaven light him surely, and may he sit upon the highest throne of all the saints! . . . But it's my heart is cracking within me, to look upon you and you shrunk to the size of a little child with all the holy torments you've been after enduring for my sake. . . . And yet, now I'm looking more at you, it's so grand I'm seeing you, that you're filling up the heavens and the earth for me like the Holy Virgin in her robe of stars!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

CATHLEEN

Whisht! Whisht! It's just a little old woman I am, is after wearying the High King of heaven and all the saints, to be forgiving the son is dearer to her than all of them, may they grant me absolution for saying it out to you, pulse of my heart! (*She pauses suddenly and picks up the cloth of his sleeve, noting the holes in it and folding her lips severely.*) How is it you're wearing a shirt the like of this? I'm thinking yonder King's daughter is better at the picturing on cloth than she is at taking needful stitches in the clothes of the man has given up two worlds for her!

COLUM

It's no matter at all. Let us not be talking of her. It's yourself I've a thirst and hunger to hear tell of. And Michael, too . . . Is it well he is?

CATHLEEN (*folding her hands solemnly on her breast*)

It is well he is surely, God rest his soul.

COLUM (*aghast*)

Is it Michael is *dead*, mother?

CATHLEEN (*bowing her head*)

The holy saints did be carrying him in their arms from this hard world, this day is a year.

COLUM (*overcome*)

Michael! . . . Little Michael is dead, and me never knowing it or looking on his face again! Ochone! *go deo!* . . . Ochone! Ochone!

CATHLEEN

Do not be grieving for him, and he in peace

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

and glory, that was living under the black lash of a woman's raging tongue and shrivelling with her evil tempers.

COLUM

Is it Sara Darcy maimed his life for him? My curse upon her!

CATHLEEN (*drawing down his lifted hand*)

Let you not curse her or any one, lest the curses fall back upon yourself.

COLUM (*putting his head down on his mother's knees*)

But Michael! . . . Little Michael that I learned to walk . . . Ochone! Ochone!

CATHLEEN (*after smoothing his hair in silence for a time, glancing searchingly around the room as she does so*)

Give over grieving, agra . . . for it's a limit is put upon my time with you, and there's much is wanting to be said. (*Suddenly speaking in a new, uplifted, solemn voice.*) Colum . . . it's a vision I've had, and you in it . . . and that King's daughter . . .

COLUM (*awed*)

A vision?

CATHLEEN

A vision sent from Above. The midnight is past it was, and I lying on the floor of my cabin before the Cross, since sun-down. (*Colum groans.*) Whisht! Whisht! . . . and a white sleep fell on me. . . . Then on a sudden a sword of flame smote through it, and a voice called to me and it saying: "Rise upon your feet Cathleen Dara, and behold what it is you shall

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

behold!" And I rose up on my two feet, and followed with my two eyes, the blade of the flaming sword did be dividing the heavens from the earth. And I seen a red spot the like of blood, and it shining in the east to northward. But the time I watched it, it changed the shape it had, and swelled out upon the air, and did be floating toward me, the way I was after seeing it was a great crimson web it was. And a terror came upon me at the sight of it, and it rushing towards me, so that I was shutting my eyes for a space. And when I opened them, a shriek went out of me, for it was *you* I seen sitting upon that crimson cloth, and beside of you the King's daughter, and the four corners of it were in the fists of the four winds, and they with wings lifting them could be sweeping down the stars at one stroke . . . And the wings of the first were black, and the wings of the second were a gold color, and the third had smoky wings, and the last, wings of silver. And they dipped towards the sea beneath with the flight of gulls, and the Voice called to me again and it saying: "Let you be bringing them two to repentance and the Cross of Christ, Cathleen Dara, or if it's hardened her heart is entirely, let you be persuading your son to give back to that one her crimson cloak, the way she'll return to the Kingdoms of the Sea, and leave your son to end his days at the footstool of God Almighty, and Christ His Son."

(Ganoré has come into the room at the words "Let you be persuading your son to give back to that

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

one her crimson cloak," etc. She stands immobile, her eyes fixed on Cathleen throughout the rest of the speech. Neither Cathleen nor Colum is aware of her presence.)

COLUM (*in awe of Cathleen*)

Was it I called you a little thing, and your great, towering soul reaching to the roof of heaven and the visions of the saints? You have put a dread upon me.

CATHLEEN

Do not dread me. Surely, wasn't it for your sake only my soul did be stretching to that height of terror and wonder? To save your soul is all my soul is longing after!

COLUM (*with a groan*)

It's *my soul* is in the fists of the four winds!

CATHLEEN

Do not be saying that . . . Let you think on the promise in the vision . . . If it's loving you truly she is, surely she will turn with you to the Cross of Christ, for to save your soul and hers with it.

COLUM (*wildly*)

My soul is within her! Be saving her, if it's saving me you'd be!

GANORÉ (*to Colum*)

Give me the mantle of crimson: return to your altars.

COLUM (*turning with a start at the sound of Ganoré's voice, then laughing his reckless laugh*)

You're hearing the great love she has for me!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

CATHLEEN (*with timid courage, to Ganoré*)

If it's indeed a daughter of the ancient Sea-King (*crossing herself*) you are, princely lady let you know that the Lord Jesus did one time be saying "Peace" to the raging waves and they obeying him. Will you be prouder than your father did humble his mighty tempers to that Voice?

GANORÉ (*with her cold half-smile*)

— Gods may be courteous even to Gods that are younger:

Over the turbulent, terrible kingdom of water, Lîr and Lîr only has power and dominion forever!

(Cathleen shrinks back, crossing herself again before this blasphemy.)

COLUM (*to Cathleen*)

You might as well be coaxing the wild surf to go to Mass, as to be trying to turn that one to Christianity! Sooner could you kindle flame from the cold, drenching sea, than light a human feeling in that breast! . . . For there's no heart in it at all, Pagan or Christian, and who should know better than I, Colum Dara, that have been trying in vain to find it for a score of years!

CATHLEEN (*her eyes fixed on Ganoré*)

Surely you are loving him, King's daughter?

GANORÉ

What is this loving that holds the unloving in bondage?

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

CATHLEEN (*more boldly*)

Is it you do not love my son at all?

GANORÉ (*with great pride*)

How should I love him, and wherefore indeed?

Let him answer.

CATHLEEN (*to Colum*)

Are you hearing those dark, cold words and your pride not turning on you? Will you be setting your heart beneath her scornful feet, and the Heart was pierced for you waiting to receive you? Give her back her crimson cloak, and let you come with me to God's throne!

COLUM (*desperately*)

It's not her red cloak is binding her to me more than my red heart-strings are binding me to her! Let you go in peace and the blessing of God, mother,—let you go from this place and my love following after you, for it's not myself can be following you!

CATHLEEN (*heart-broken*)

Is it so you answer me? Is it so I'm answered by the son is more to me than my own soul?

COLUM

Forgive me . . . forgive and forget me. Go in the name of God, mother, for it's I am like the thief was crucified, to be looking on your face and yet denying you!

(*The church clock strikes twelve.*)

CATHLEEN (*putting the black cloth, which has slipped to her shoulders, again over her head*)

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

My hour is come indeed . . . Till Samhain midnight was I given to be with you, but it's midnight will be with me from this on forever . . .

(She goes slowly toward the door. Colum stands as if in the grasp of an evil dream watching her go. Ganoré looks out, beyond them both, as at infinite distances.)

CATHLEEN *(reaching the door, and turning on the threshold)*

Only yourself could send me from you. O my son, that was alive again,—and is dead,—was found, and is lost! *(She veils her head completely and goes out into the night.)*

COLUM *(breaking from his trance of misery)*

Mother! . . . Wait a little! Wait! *(He rushes out after her.)*

(Ganoré returns calmly to her needlework. A moment later the door is thrust open boldly and Sara Darcy comes into the room. She is now a fine looking woman of forty, with high color and hair as black as ever, but she is stouter and coarser and her face is very hard. She faces Ganoré, one arm akimbo, her eyes running over her with bold insolence. She has on her peasant's holiday dress and a big bright shawl pinned across her bosom. The two women gaze at each other in silence for a space, then Sara bursts into loud, rude laughter, swaying herself back and forth in an ecstasy of mirth.)

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

GANORÉ (*coldly, turning again to her needlework*)
Surely is hidden in laughter of fools their destruction.

SARA

Fools is it? Well surely, if it's me you mean is a fool, there's two of us here together. (*Pointing at Ganoré's silvery hair.*) Who but a fool would leave her natural element to catch the sickness of mortal life, the way her fine, coxcomb-colored hair is after turning to the whiteness of a patriarch's beard? The Fool-of-the-Sea you'll be surely, and you returning to it with that woolly mane upon you! Fine and grand you'll look, indeed, perched upon a rock, and combing out them griseldy locks with a comb of gold! I'm thinking you'll be screeching with shame and you peeping in your little looking-glass for to admire yourself, and the flaming wonder was your hair turned to ashes! . . . It's the little sea-men and the big sea-men will be sticking out their tongues at you I'm thinking, and the fishes goggling their eyes at you in derision!

GANORÉ

Let you be wary the turn of the tide, Sara Darcy.

SARA

Whoosh! Is it you are trying to fright me with salt water, and me after sprinkling myself from head to foot with holy water? Is it you are giving yourself airs of magic, and Samhain night past, and no power to you at all over a

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

Christian woman, has her beads and cross in her pocket? . . . Sure, when it's after thinking the matter over for a score of years I've been, and the curiosity to look on you again growing in me daily, the way it was like to burst me at whiles, it's more than a boast of empty words it will take to have me frightened. And there's more in it, too, than you're thinking—(*She takes a step toward Ganoré, and looks at her cunningly, lowering her voice.*) I've that in my own power would have you treating me civil and soft enough and you knowing the truth of it! . . .

(*Ganoré continues embroidering imperturbably.*)

SARA (*looking around the room with a contemptuous sneer*)

A fine, tidy mate you've made him, poor man! . . . And the whole place in ruins, and dust enough upon it to fill a grave! (*She glances angrily at Ganoré's golden robe.*) But it's little you're caring, I suppose, so your own back is heaped with ill-got silks and satins! Let you be taking what joy's to be had from them, for surely it's not they are smoothing out a line from your face is the like of the sea for wrinkles itself and hoary age! . . . It's shame should seize you, I'm thinking, and you a Sea-God's daughter, to be ageing before me a mortal woman, that has still her fine black hair and the fire of youth upon her! (*Her look and manner grow suddenly cunning again, and she speaks in a wheedling voice.*) Surely it's longing you

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

must be at whiles to return to your grand palaces and pleasures under the sea? (*Ganoré takes no notice of her. She continues in the same manner.*) It isn't surely the love of a mortal man, and he ageing worse than yourself, would be keeping you back from the gay festivals and delights I've heard tell is the portion of the sea-people, and they romping about in the desires of their hearts with no religion at all to put a dread on them? (*She goes nearer to Ganoré.*) Is it, maybe, you're after teasing him sometimes to give you back your crimson cloak the way you could be returning to your green, glassy halls of splendour and get shut of the ills of mortal life?

(*Ganoré pauses in her work and looks at the woman steadily.*)

SARA (*more wheedlingly than ever*)

Surely now, you'll be giving me a hint of the way you'd feel and your red cloak found and put into your two hands? Is it throwing it into the fire you'd be after, or casting it over your own shoulders and away with you to the depths of the sea again? Come on now, tell me that, for it's more in it maybe than you'd be thinking.

(*Colum enters, his face white and wild with sorrow. He stops short on seeing Sara, and his look changes to a scowl of anger and detestation.*)

COLUM

Is it you, Sara Darcy, are in your right mind,

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

and you daring to put forward your foot across my threshold? (*He points fiercely to the open door.*) Hasten off out of here, before you feel the weight of my anger upon you.

SARA (*facing him undaunted, her eyes snapping*)

A Christian welcome that is surely, to be giving your first visitor in a score of years, and your brother's widow beside of it!

COLUM

Let you not name my brother to me, you that hunted him to the grave with your evil tongue and tempers! Quit off from here, before I'll break a female bone or two, and shame my manhood!

SARA

Shame your manhood, is it? And how will you be shaming your grand manhood worse than you shamed it a score of years ago when you did be flinging off a decent girl like filth, in the face of the whole world? Shame, you're saying? Let you remember the dirty wrong you did me and keep a civil tongue to me, and me honoring your roof is crumbling under the ban of God, by coming beneath it!

COLUM (*glaring at her under his heavy brows*)

It's the Devil's ban I'll call down on you, and you not footing it out of here in a hurry! Go on now, while I've the sense left to keep my two hands from your fat scrag, for it's not my brother's widow I'm seeing in you, but his murderer!

SARA (*very ugly*)

Maybe it's a word for me your sea-woman

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

will be speaking . . . (*turning to Ganoré*)
when she'll be thinking of a crimson cloth that
I'm knowing the whereabouts of!

COLUM (*quickly*)

What's that you're saying?

SARA (*still to Ganoré*)

Wouldn't you be after saying a kind word for
me, sea-woman, and I the only person does
be knowing where is your crimson cloak?

COLUM

The black liar that you are Sara Darcy! . . .
None knows that but myself!

GANORÉ (*to Colum*)

Let you go warily, fatal the hour is upon us.
(*To Sara*)

Let you be telling me where is my mantle of
crimson.

COLUM (*pointing at Sara in derision*)

Let *her* be telling you? . . . And she a liar
should be a shape of rock-salt like the woman
of old! (*He breaks into a wild, jeering laugh.*)
Surely, let her be telling you, if it's amusing
yourself you'd be with hearing lies would have
the dead turning in their graves with laugh-
ing!

GANORÉ (*as before*)

Let you be telling me where is my mantle of
crimson.

SARA (*furiously to Colum, who is still laughing*)

Burst your ribs with laughing,—do now!
—It'll be easier for your heart to jump out
between them, and race after her, when she'll

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

be wrapped in her red cloak and fleeing back to the sea forever! Let you laugh, I'm saying, for maybe it's not in a lengthy while you'll be after laughing again! . . . You that made a mock of me in my youth, and threw me from you the way you'd be picking a fish-scale from your shirt! You that flung off a Christian girl for a wild, pagan creature from the unholy sea! Let you laugh while you can, Colum Dara. Let you laugh loud and long, for it's only shrieks of sorrow will be coming out of you, and I getting even with you this night forever! (*She turns to Ganoré.*) Where is your crimson cloak were you asking me? . . . (*She retreats out of Colum's way, and takes a step toward Ganoré, then with a sudden gesture brings out the crimson cloak from beneath her shawl and holds it high toward Ganoré crying:*) Here!

(*Ganoré with a cry of joy grasps at it, but Colum is too quick for Sara. In a bound he reaches her, and tears the cloak from her.*)

COLUM

The fool of Hell you are, Sara Darcy! Small good it did you to be finding this cloak by evil spells and pacts with the Devil on Samhain night, and he betraying you at the last of it! Little good it was to you surely, and you clawing in the graveyard mould for scraps of horror to work the charm is black with damnation! . . . (*Sneering savagely.*) Was it a strip of dead man's skin, maybe, you were asking for to bind Satan to your will, and it peeled

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

from the breast of the man you murdered? Let yourself be bound with it to double torment, for it's doubling the pains of Hell 'twill be to you, and you remembering you had the power to harm me one time, and it failing you in the hour set! . . . Go out from here in shame and humbleness, Sara Darcy! Go from my sight with the rags of your pride round you, and your broken triumph scattered before you like sharp flints!

GANORÉ (*to Sara, speaking in a loud, commanding voice*)

Whole be your pride and your triumph unbroken, O woman!

Let you be taking your fill of the glory of hatred,

Let you be folding revenge for a splendour about you!

All that you longed to befall him of evil has fallen,

Sorrow and sorrow alone he has had for his portion,

Loneliness ever and never delight of his dreaming.

I that was freer than foam is and wilder than water,

How should I love him that bound me in fetters of loving?

Let you be going triumphant in all you have longed for.

(During this speech Colum has looked at her steadily, his face growing more set with pain and hopelessness. At the end, he seems to have

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

forgotten Sara's presence, to be absorbed only in Ganoré. Sara watches them with an evil, eager curiosity.)

COLUM

Is it you I've cradled in my heart all this length of years, are after stripping me bare before my chief enemy, the way coast-thieves do be stripping a drowned corpse to the scavengers of the air? Is it you have cast the torch of my love on the dung-heap of an evil woman's scorn, and thrown down the sorrow was my pitiful pride, for her to trample? (*He goes nearer to Ganoré.*) Let me look a long look on you, for it's not only your beauty I'll be fixing on the lining of my eyes, but into the pits of your eyes I'll be looking for the soul I gave up to you if it's still alive it is, or drowned in the dreadful deep that is a woman . . . (*There is a pause during which they gaze steadily at each other, then Colum steps back, putting his hands over his own eyes for an instant. He straightens himself suddenly and throws back his head with a short laugh.*) Terrible wonders of women are the two of you surely! (*To Sara.*) But if it's triumphing you are this night, it's she shall triumph also! (*With a sudden gesture he flings the crimson cloak over Ganoré's shoulders.*) Away with you to free your empty heart to the cold sea, for it's I am done with loving!

(Ganoré with a cry of joy seizes the cloak in both hands and shakes it out behind her, lifting it up

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

at the same time over her head so that it forms a canopy above her.)

GANORÉ

Free is Ganoré again, and her bondage a dreaming!

(Then she calls to Colum in a voice that he has never heard before.)

Let you come under my mantle, O Colum, my lover!

Let you be sharing it, you that have given me freedom!

(Colum stares at her unable to believe.)

You that have given me freedom, it's love I will give you!

COLUM

Ganoré! Ganoré! *(He rushes to her, and she flings the great cloak about him, so that as he clasps her in his arms the crimson folds hide them both.)*

SARA

Shame to you! And the two of you old and bleached as the ribs of Noah's ship, to be squeezing and kissing the like of tinkers in May! Shame to you, I'm saying! Shame to you!

GANORÉ *(throws back the cloak, and she and Colum are seen to be young again)*

Look on the gifts are bestowed with the mantle of crimson,

Beauty unfading forever and youth everlasting!

Short was your triumph, O woman of evil desiring,

Short was your triumph, but we are triumphant forever!

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

SARA

Saints of God! It's mad I am! . . . It's mad
and crazed I am surely . . .

GANORÉ (*invoking Lîr*)

A Dhe na mara! Ganoré, Ganoré is calling! . . .
God of the Sea, by the might of the mantle of
crimson,

Let you be hurling the chariot wingéd with
thunder,

Let you be loosing the horses are bridled with
lightning,

Silver maned horses of Manannan, speed to
Ganoré!

A Dhe na mara! Ganoré, Ganoré is calling!

*(There comes a flash of lightning and the roll of
distant thunder. Then far off the Voices of the
Sea-women, and the Voices of Lîr and Manan-
nan.)*

VOICES OUT AT SEA

Ganoré! Ganoré! Ganoré! Joy! Joy for
Ganoré!

SARA (*moaning with terror*)

Oh, Holy Mother of God! Protect me! Save
me!

*(The next instant there is another flash of light-
ning and a loud crash of thunder with it, then
utter darkness and a great sound of rushing water,
as though the waves of the sea were sweeping
through the room. Sara gives a terrible shriek,
then all is still except for the noise of the water*

THE SEA-WOMAN'S CLOAK

which subsides gradually. A flash of lightning followed by two more, reveals the room empty, but with trails of seaweed upon the floor and clinging here and there to the furniture. Sara is seen lying stretched upon her face, her long black hair swept out from her head by the receding waves.)

CURTAIN

NOVEMBER EVE

A PLAY

TO
THE MEMORY OF
EUGENE O'DWYER
A BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

BEGA, *an old woman much loved by her neighbours.*

MAURYA, *a young girl, the friend of Ilva.*

DONAL *a young man.*

AN OLD STRANGER WOMAN.

SHEILA,	}	<i>neighbours.</i>
NOLAN,		
PHELM,		
THE PIPER,		
OONA,		
NORA,		

ILVA, *a young girl, the child of Bega's Foster-son.*

A WANDERING FRIAR.

DERMOT.

SHAWN RUA, *a murderer.*

THREE PHANTOMS.

THE SPIRIT OF SHAWN RUA'S WIFE.

IOR, *a fairy prince.*

Fairies, fairy-lights, etc.

NOVEMBER EVE

THE FIRST ACT

Time: Many years ago.

Scene: The kitchen of Bega's cottage in a wild part of Ireland. A turf fire is burning in the chimney place. On the crane is a big pot and potatoes tumbling in it under the "white horses." There is a round of corned beef on the table, and a barnyard goose roasting at the fire. A big sweet cake is also baking there in a pot-oven. There is a dish of apples for "bobbing", and a tub of water to put them in. There are snails on a covered platter ready to mark out their true-loves' name-lette in the flour for the girls that set them in it over night. The kitchen is furnished with a cupboard, a table, some chairs, some three-legged stools, etc. Steps left lead up to the turf-loft.

It is still half an hour before sunset, but the neighbours will be coming soon, for this is Hal-lowe'en, November Eve, when the Sidhe (Fairies) and the Spirits of the Dead are given power over the living. It is an ill thing to be out of doors on November Eve.

Bega is looking anxiously from the window. Maurya takes up the roast goose from the hearth, sets it on a dish and carries it to the table.

NOVEMBER EVE

MAURYA (*stepping back to look proudly at the goose*)

It's the grand feast entirely you're giving the neighbours this November Eve! Sure, that roast goose would be after admiring himself, and he alive! (*As there is no answer, she turns and sees Bega at the window.*) Is it coming she is at last?

BEGA (*coming forward with a sigh*)

Not a sign of herself at all. But I have her promise to return before sunset, and it's she is the good girsha for keeping her promises.

MAURYA

Then it's you musn't be worrying, Mother Bega. What will I be about now?

BEGA

Here's a branch of rowan. You can be putting it over the door. And take this sprig of the ground-ivy to be mixing with it. *They* are in great fear of the ground-ivy! (*She crosses herself, exclaiming:*) 'Twas on a Monday I first thought it!

MAURYA

And while I am doing that, let you be setting a branch against the chimney. It's no callers we want down the chimney *this* Eve (*crossing herself*) when *they* and the dead have more power!

BEGA

Whisht! Do not be talking about it. (*She sets the branch of rowan against the chimney, then turns and watches Maurya who has sprung upon a chair and is fastening the other branch above the door.*) The grand thing it is to be young!

NOVEMBER EVE

Quick and light you are on your feet as a fiddler's fingers on his fiddle. It's some man will be getting the fine wife in you, Maurya!

MAURYA (*smiling and jumping down*)

That's the truth, maybe, and my thanks to you for your nice words; but I am hoping it's not alone for my youth a man will be marrying with me. Sure it's a queer thing the way old people do be always praising youth, and young people never giving it a stray thought.

BEGA

A crown of glory it is, that all may be seeing the wonder of but him that wears it. I do be thinking sometimes that the Almighty is the like of a young man with no big white beard on him at all as people think, but a splendour of smooth youth on him and a great everlasting joy in it.

MAURYA (*somewhat scandalized*)

Let you not be taking it bad, but I'm afeared the priests would be after calling it a sin to picture the Almighty in His green youth.

BEGA

Then it's Himself will forgive me, for I meant no sin but a great honour to Him. (*She hands Maurya a crock of water.*) Sprinkle a little sprinkle of this on the threshold, alanna. It's safe the house will be entirely then, with the rowan over the door and chimney and the foot-water beneath, that no evil thing can cross.

(*Maurya goes and sprinkles the water, stopping at the window on her way back.*)

NOVEMBER EVE

BEGA (*eagerly*)

Is it Ilva you're seeing?

MAURYA

I see something far away . . . A dark little spot, and it moving quickly. It is not herself, though, it is no person at all I'm thinking. . . .

BEGA

What is it then?

MAURYA (*crossing herself; in a scared voice*)

Let you not be afraid, but it has the look of a black lamb.

BEGA

Now God forbid! And my darling out there with itself! 'Tis evil spirits take that shape November Eve! Oh, it's the great fear is in my heart for her!

MAURYA

The saints protect her! There's an evil look to it indeed.

BEGA

Is it coming or going the creature is?

MAURYA

Let you be easy. Going from us up the face of the hill it is, the way it's getting smaller with every lep. There! It is gone entirely! Maybe it was only a stray dog, and he distracted with the boys pitching stones at him.

BEGA

Maybe . . . maybe . . . God grant it was only that. But if the sun does be setting and Ilva not here, it's in two pieces my heart will be!

NOVEMBER EVE

MAURYA

Sure, mother dear, you mustn't be tormenting yourself. It's high the sun is yet, and no power to the likes of that till after sunset.

BEGA

All the morning she was helping me, content and cheerful the way you'd be thinking of a bird fussing over its nest, and it with the spring joy in it. Then in a clap it's wild she was to be out and away. "The wind's come over the bog for me!" says she. "It's calling me it is to play with it!" she says.

MAURYA

It's the queer things surely she does be saying at whiles, and the queer ways she does be acting.

BEGA

It's the good dear child she is for all that.

MAURYA

She is surely. There will be no one near or far, and they not loving her. But there's talk of her strange ways all the same.

BEGA (*anxiously*)

What like is it they say?

MAURYA

For one thing that it's maybe her strange name has to do with her strange ways.

BEGA

And what else beside that?

MAURYA (*evasively*)

Oh, people do be always blathering! What for would I be telling over their foolishness to you? (*She goes to the pot-oven and takes out the*

NOVEMBER EVE

cake.) The beauty it is! It's Ilva has the Queen's hand for cake!

BEGA

She has the Queen's way for everything, God be good to her! (*Coaxingly.*) 'Tis not the unkind things they're after saying about her?

MAURYA

It is not, indeed!

BEGA

Then let you be telling them.

MAURYA (*uneasily*)

Sure, it's only a bit wary they do be feeling for her sake and herself with that queer name on her, and it a mystery. Sure I do often be wondering myself how she came by that queer name.

BEGA (*after a pause, gloomily*)

And it's wondering more you would be, if you knew. There's a story to that same would be making the fortune of a strolling singer, and he telling only the stark naked truth in his song.

MAURYA (*eagerly*)

Oh, I would be loving to hear that story!

BEGA (*hesitating*)

It's Donal alone has ever heard it from me. Poor Donal!

MAURYA

Poor Donal, indeed! And he destroyed soul and body with love for Ilva, and she not caring for him!

BEGA

She will not be loving any man with that love.

NOVEMBER EVE

I do not think it is in her at all to love with such love.

MAURYA

Whisht, mother! It's in all girls to love some man with that love.

BEGA

In all but in that girl. Her heart is the like of a harp with one string missing. A man would as well be trying to dip up the moon from a lake and drink it, as be trying to quench his fiery love from that heart.

MAURYA

Is it the story behind her name has you so sure of that?

BEGA

I'm thinking I'll tell you that story, Maurya, for I've a great need on me this Eve to be sharing it with a true person the like yourself is, that will not be telling it again to the butt of the world.

MAURYA

Sure, it's not me will be even whispering it alone to myself in sleep!

BEGA

You don't know, maybe, that herself has another name before Ilva?

MAURYA

Never a know do I know about it at all, mother dear. A power of tales do be passing round, but they all different, so it's not me is believing any of them. And has she another name now?

NOVEMBER EVE

BEGA

She has surely, and it the name of a holy saint,
but Ilva it had to be also, for itself was a
promise to the dying, God rest his soul!

MAURYA

And who was he, poor man?

BEGA (*looking far off*)

Two sons I had. One, the son of my flesh did
put the splendour of women upon me, the way
I was knowing what terrible great glory did be
blazing in Mary's heart and the Son of God a
babe beneath it. But when my son died after
one little year, then I was knowing that the
darkness did be hiding the wicked world and
our Lord on the cross, was shining light to the
darkness was in the heart of Mary. (*She puts
her hand over her eyes.*)

MAURYA

Ah, poor mother! The heart within me is full
of tears, and they running over for you.

BEGA

Let you not be crying for my ancient sorrow.
There's new sorrows of your own will be com-
ing to you soon enough, poor child. Besides,
God was after sending me comfort by the son
of another woman, and she dead. It was by
the roadside I came on her, and it falling to the
night and cold as the heart of pride. There was
but one warm spot to her at all, poor creature,
and that the babe was moving on her breast,
tweeting after the frozen milk in it, the way
you'll be hearing a naked bird, and it fallen from
the nest. I had up that babe to my own breast

NOVEMBER EVE

so quick I'm not remembering to this day the lifting of it. Not a thing of it all do I remember but that one minute the heart in me was ice, the way it had been ever since my boy died, and the minute after it was melting with the warmth of that foundling babe the like of a stream in spring. Glory be to God that let me find him!

MAURYA

And it was he was your foster-son?

BEGA

It was; but after two weeks or three I did be loving him the way I couldn't be loving him more, and he coming to me in the torment of my body.

MAURYA

Sure, that was a gift from Heaven.

BEGA (*somewhat bitterly*)

Heaven does be lending, not giving to us mortal creatures. It was a man they let him be though before they took him back again. It was a king of men he looked, and he a score only. Oh, my boy! My grand, handsome boy! What was it had me that I didn't guess the poison in the flower of your beauty! . . . He had the look of other places than this world, Maurya . . . It came upon him early . . . and it's the strange glamour'd music he would be ever making with voice and pipes . . . It was not the music you will be hearing at fair or wedding . . . It was not like any other music whatever in all the world. And his voice was not the like of any other voice at all. If

NOVEMBER EVE

the moon could harp a soft sound from the rain falling, I'm thinking it would be like that voice of his . . . something wild and far away and sweeter than sweet . . .

MAURYA (*in great awe*)

God save us! Do you think he had heard the fairy harp?

BEGA

Whisht! Whisht! Do not be saying it aloud. . . .

MAURYA (*whispering*)

But it's that is in the back of your mind?

BEGA

It's far more than that is in the back of my mind, my sorrow!

MAURYA (*still half-whispering*)

And was he after wandering from you now and then? Them that have heard . . . *it* . . . do be great rovers people say.

BEGA

It was always roaming he was, back and forward through the world, now away for days, then for weeks, at last for a long year together, and it terrible with the black dread in my heart and the wanting him the way it was like a great drouth on me. (*She starts suddenly to her feet and points at a patch of red sunlight on the wall.*) Look! Look there! The sun is after setting! Red as blood it is! And she without in the terror of this Eve falling! . . . Oh, why will she be wandering from me . . . and me loving her so, and me so old!

NOVEMBER EVE

MAURYA

Sure now, you mustn't be crying and lamenting. It's red the light is indeed, but the sun no ways near the setting. Let you be remembering her promise to come back in time surely, and tell me the story to the end: that will turn your mind from worrying.

BEGA

My old wits are flying about like ashes when the broom falls on the hearth. What was it I was after telling you last?

MAURYA

You were saying it was a great wanderer he was, and he a whole year away from you.

BEGA

But he came back to me again. . . . One day he came back to me with oh! what a sorrowful white face on him, and he so young. . . . Death was in it and worse than death. 'Tis that poor face of him does be always rising between me and the faces of the saints! (*She keens softly.*) On yonder threshold he fell a-dying and a month-old babe in his arms. . . .

MAURYA

Ah, the poor sorrowful man! . . . God be good to him. . . .

BEGA

"Mother of my heart a long good-bye" says he, "for I have sailed the voyage of Bran and it's there I am returning. This is my child," he says. "She was born of a day of love in the land of Heart's Desire, and it's Ilva you will call her. Be promising me that, mother," he

NOVEMBER EVE

says, and his dear eyes were two dying prayers to me in his poor pale face. So I answered them with the promise. At that he had a smile for me, but Death wiped it from his mouth and there came out a sob instead, and he was gone from me . . . Oh Mary, that is a mother yourself, be good to him!

MAURYA (*half-crying herself*)

Now, now! You mustn't be crying, darling! Sure, the blessed Virgin has him comforted this long while! Sure, you mustn't be distressing yourself for him, and he in glory!

BEGA (*turning a haggard face to her and in a whispering voice*)

Isn't it just the doubt of that same is gnawing out the heart in me! Would the holy saints be opening the door of heaven to him, and he speaking of unholy joys with his last breath? Would the mother of God be caring for one that gave his child a mother without a soul?

MAURYA (*crossing herself*)

Holy Michael, protect us! Are you after believing Ilva's mother was one of *them*?

BEGA (*with listless bitterness*)

Sure, it's by many doors I have tried to get out from that belief, but the keys are all turned in the locks, and it's shut fast in it I am, like a soul in prison.

MAURYA (*awed*)

'Tis a dark sorrow yours is indeed, poor woman!

BEGA

You will be understanding now what is in my heart for that strange name of hers, and why

NOVEMBER EVE

I am so fearful for her on this Eve, when *they* have more power after sunset.

MAURYA (*shuddering and glancing at the window*)
It's fearful I am myself now. But the sun is well above the hills. Take your heart in both hands and lift it up to God. I will put my prayers to yours for her.

(*Donal opens the door and comes in.*)

DONAL

God save all here but the cat.

BEGA AND MAURYA

God save yourself.

BEGA (*seizing his arm*)

Oh, Donal! 'Tis Ilva is straying in the hills and this terrible Eve falling faster than a black star!

DONAL

Let you be easy. It's not two minutes or three since I seen her, and she nearby.

BEGA

The saints be praised! And what was she after?

DONAL

Singing she was in the clear joy of her life, and the little feet fluttering beneath her the like of two swift birds. Sure, dry leaves in a gust do not skim lighter than her little feet. There's not the match to them in the four corners of the world, I'm thinking!

MAURYA

It's she has the pretty feet indeed, Donal.

NOVEMBER EVE

BEGA

And what was she after saying to you? And what was it had you that you didn't bring her home with you?

DONAL

Is it me could be bringing her home, and she not wanting to come? Sure, I was imploring her to do that same, but she only let out a little laugh at me the like of a bird with a trill, and then away with her!

BEGA

And was she after telling you where she was going?

DONAL

She was not. "A good little errand it is," says she, "and my secret." But you were not to fret, for I was to tell you it was here she'd be before sunset surely.

BEGA

Thanks be to God! That brings a thaw to my old heart, for a lump of ice it was she had turned it to.

DONAL

'Tis not to a lump of ice she does be turning my heart! A knot of blazing thorns it is within me because of her!

(Maurya busies herself in other parts of the room, seeing that they want to talk together, then goes up the stair to the turf-loft.)

BEGA

Ah, Donal . . . let you be quenching that blaze with the power of a strong man. How

NOVEMBER EVE

often will I be minding you of the soft coldness is in her the way she does be shrinking back even from tales of lovers? Is it you will let yourself be broken with vain longing for one will never turn to you or to any man?

DONAL

My fiery love shall draw her to me the way the south draws the wild birds in winter!

BEGA

Easier could you draw a wave of the sea to come and lie warm on your breast! Have wisdom, dear. Are you knowing the story of her birth and yet will not be seeing that she is not the like of other girshas?

DONAL

I am loving her all the more for that, maybe.

BEGA

And amn't I loving you next to her in my old heart, and will you maybe lose both yourselves to me with the madness that's in you?

DONAL (*staring at her*)

Sure, that's the queer thing to be saying! How could I be doing that, and me madder than a skinned king?

BEGA (*glancing around to see that Maurya is not listening, and then whispering at his ear*)

They are jealous, Donal . . . They are very jealous . . .

DONAL (*looking very troubled back at her*)

And what is it you're meaning by that? Let you be setting plain words before me.

NOVEMBER EVE

BEGA

'Tis a foolish thing to put the terror of the heart into spoken words the way they'll be nimble with the breath of life in them and mixing with the elements to work harm. Let you be guessing within yourself at my meaning.

DONAL

It's not me is afraid of speech, and it the glory of men over the beasts of the field. (*With good-natured scorn.*) Is it the good people you're thinking of?

BEGA

Whisht! For God's love! whisht!

DONAL (*smiling broadly*)

Sure now, mother! You're not believing it's after enticing her the fairies are?

BEGA (*fiercely*)

Whisht! I'm saying! Is it away in your head you are, to be shrieking such things on the ridge of this Eve?

DONAL (*more soberly*)

What is it has you thinking such thoughts?

BEGA (*half-whispering*)

In the lonesome night that God did be making for silence, I have heard her talking and she with the heaviness of sleep upon her. . . .

DONAL (*breaking in, relieved*)

Is that all? Sure, many persons do be talking in their sleep at whiles!

BEGA

But it's not in a strange tongue the like of music they will be talking, I suppose? Nor it wasn't

NOVEMBER EVE

you was weeping to hear the vain sorrow of exile in their voices, and the blood stiffening round your heart with fear of something at the bed-foot you couldn't see?

DONAL (*trying to soothe her*)

Now let you be sensible, mother honey. It was only your own fearful thoughts was at the bed-foot, and how could you be seeing them?

BEGA

It was more than my thoughts was there, and she conversing with it, God save us! For she'd wait at whiles the way one person does be waiting for another to answer back, then on again with her pitiful babble. Oh, it's not one time but many I've watched beside her, and she stretched in the moonlight shining, white as itself, but her mouth red like rowan-berries and a queer, wistful, sorrowful smile on it brought down my tears. And always the two little feet of her would be dancing against the empty air, with the longing was in her to be going from us to that one at the bed-foot I couldn't see!

DONAL

Sure now, it's plain to the world, 'twas a bad dream had her suffering. You should have roused her and brought comfort to the two of you! (*Coaxingly.*) Come now, mother, I'm giving you my Christian oath it was that surely!

BEGA

It was not that, I'm saying, and let you heed me for the sake of your two souls! It was one

NOVEMBER EVE

of *them* was haunting around her, and he maybe a mighty prince in his own place! (*She crosses herself.*) Are you forgetting her mother was not a mortal woman?

DONAL (*shaken, also crossing himself*)

The splendour of God's power between her and them!

BEGA

Amen to that. But it's He Himself has given power to evil also in His strange wisdom, so let you not make them jealous with your love, and lose her to us, maybe, as I said.

DONAL (*vehemently*)

It's not losing her, but saving her, my love will be! For what is it is strong as death? Love! And what is it is stronger than they are? Death! And why would I be fearing them and me loving her the way a man under water does be loving the air above?

BEGA

It's the dear, brave boy you are surely, but oh, Donal! I'm fearing it will be with you and your love as it was with Cuculin and the waves. Seven days and seven nights did he strive with them, till he fell from hunger and weariness, and the cold waves went over him!

DONAL

Sure, and it's written also, many waters cannot drown love, so it's safe I am against seven times the waves that went over Cuculin!

MAURYA (*from the stairs*)

Cuculin is it? (*She comes down with some straight sticks in her hand, the "kipeens" for*

NOVEMBER EVE

trying fortunes; she lays the sticks on a chair and comes forward.) Then it's the poetry you're talking. Might I be listening, too? I've a great wish for the poetry! (*To Donal, teasingly.*) Maybe it's yourself has been writing a poem, and you Cuculin in it, and Ilva the Queen!

DONAL (*in the same tone*)

Let you not be dropping dead with surprise at the truth and you telling it by accident. (*Touching his breast pocket.*) The poem is here itself, but it's Ilva only is in it.

MAURYA

Oh, isn't she the lucky girl! Sure, I didn't think 'twas you was a poet, Donal. I'll be looking at you with a new look now.

BEGA (*to Donal*)

It's proud and happy I am this day, and you a poet!

DONAL

It's not a poet I am except only when I do be thinking of Ilva.

MAURYA (*with a little laugh*)

Then sure it's a poet you are all the time!

BEGA (*to Maurya, but smilingly*)

Be quiet now with your teasing! (*To Donal.*) And let you be saying your poem, dear.

DONAL (*stiffly, to Maurya*)

You would rather not be hearing it maybe?

MAURYA

The proud boy that you are! Isn't it me is just aching to hear it?

NOVEMBER EVE

DONAL (*dryly*)

I'm hoping it's not aching worse you'll be when you have it heard. (*He recites.*)

It is for Ilva that I, Donal, am making this poem,

Her of the strange sweet name

And it fitting her as the little curl fits her ear.

Air-fine and pale she is like the moon at mid-day;

But at whiles there is colour in her cheek.

It is like the red of evening over milk

When the girshas are late at the milking,

It is like the red of dawn over white May-flowers,

It will come and it will go like the little laugh of a girl in love.

It is she has eyes bluer than the wool on Helen's distaff.

It is she is more like a fair spirit than its double to a rainbow

And it shining against white hills.

I, Donal, who am making this song for her

Will give her my heart-strings to weave into a mantle,

Only when it is woven I will say to her:

"Cast it over the two of us, Mavourneen,

It is finer than cloth of gold

It is a web woven of pure love!"

BEGA

O Donal! have I lived to see the day, and you a real poet!

MAURYA

I shall be trembling to say "good-night" and

NOVEMBER EVE

“good-morning” to you now. It’s wonderful you are in my eyes entirely.

BEGA

And sure, it’s wonderful to know that Helen span. The poets do be always talking of Helen. A great Queen she was, and yet she span. Think of that now!

MAURYA

And her wool was blue . . . that is queerer still.

(Sheila, a neighbour, looks in.)

SHEILA

God save all here but the cat!

BEGA, MAURYA AND DONAL

God save you kindly.

(Sheila enters, followed by an Old Woman.)

SHEILA *(to Bega)*

Here’s a stranger woman I’ve made bold to bring along with me, Mother Bega, and she destroyed roaming from the far edges of the sea on her two feet. She was knocking on my door an hour gone by, asking shelter from this Eve. It’s the grand stories of ancient times she does be knowing, and songs of the big, white-bosomed Queens of Ireland, the way we’ll be gay listening to her at the tail of the evening.

BEGA

Welcome kindly, stranger woman. Let you sit down and be taking your rest.

NOVEMBER EVE

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN

It's strangers we all are in a strange world, lady of the house. May your welcome turn into a crock of pure gold for you, and may the powers of darkness speed by this house to-night on far errands and not be stopping to look in even.

BEGA

It's welcome you are three times again for that wish, and may God grant it.

SHEILA

Sure, is it the first we are, and it so near sunset! Haven't they the brave hearts to be without so late on November Eve! . . . Here is a cake for you, Mother Bega . . . My daughter in Dublin is just after sending it to me . . . Look at the little manneen on the top of it, and he all dressed in sugar!

BEGA (*taking the cake from Sheila*)

Thank you kindly, Sheila. It's you have the generous heart . . . It is handsome enough for the Queen's wedding . . . Oh, but the sugar manneen will please Ilva finely!

SHEILA

And where is the child herself?

BEGA

She will be coming soon now . . . soon now . . . Give a look from the window, Donal . . . Do you see any sight of herself?

DONAL (*after glancing from the window*)

I do not. (*Turning again to her.*) But let you be easy, mother. If it's not here she is in three minutes or four, I will be bringing her back

NOVEMBER EVE

to you in spite of the world and what's under it!

(Nolan O'Conner looks in.)

NOLAN

God save all here but the cat!

ALL

God save yourself. . . .

NOLAN

There's Nora and Oona close behind me, and Phelim's footing it along with the Piper . . . they have a drop or two taken between them, the amadhauns! It's ready for fun-making they are, surely!

(Nora and Oona looking in.)

NORA AND OONA

God save all here but the cat!

ALL

God save yourselves. God save you kindly.

NORA *(looking on the table)*

Oh, isn't it the fine feast you're giving us, Mother Bega!

OONA

It's we are the lucky ones to be asked by you, mother dear.

(The Piper puts in his head and Phelim after him.)

THE PIPER AND PHELIM

God save all here but the cat!

ALL

God save yourselves, etc.

NOVEMBER EVE

BEGA

A hundred welcomes before you all . . . Sit down . . . Sit down . . . (*She goes over beside Donal.*) Do you see her? . . . Do you see her now, Donal?

DONAL

Let you be patient mother. The sun will not be down for a while yet, and it's her chance we must be giving her to keep her word.

(*The sun has almost gone down by now, and the room is full of a bright, red light.*)

SHEILA (*coming to the window*)

Isn't it any sign of herself she's giving yet? Maybe it's the other way she'll be coming, and you not seeing her from here.

BEGA

Maybe . . . maybe . . . I was thinking of that. . . .

(*Other Neighbours come in, crying out and laughing together, "God save all here but the cat." The others answer them. The sunlight is growing dimmer and dimmer. Some of the others gather about the window.*)

BEGA

Oh, what can have happened her? It's in great trouble I am. . . . It's in great trouble and grief I am entirely.

ONE OLD WOMAN (*whispering to another*)

No wonder at all in that. . . . It's tonight the Dead and *them* dance together . . . Mary between us and them!

NOVEMBER EVE

THE OTHER OLD WOMAN

And it's when the sun has set, the power over the living comes to them. Michael preserve us all!

OONA (*whispering to Nora*)

I've a cousin lives on Innis Sark, was friends with a girl that saw *them* dancing on November Eve, and the Dead with them.

NORA

God be good to us! . . . Was she after dancing, too?

OONA

No . . . she had a bit prayer about her neck and a sprig of ground-ivy, and they were saving her. . . . She said the long shrouds flew out like laughing. . . .

NORA

Mary Mother!

OONA

And they shining like cat's eyes in the dark. . . .

BEGA

It's perishing my heart is like a feather in the fire. . . . O ochone! ochone!

MANY TOGETHER

O ochone! ochone! O wirra, wirra!

BEGA

The blood is like cruddled milk about my heart!
There's a black fear on me, and no more hope
in me at all!

DONAL (*jumping to the door*)

The sun's down! It's after her I am this minute!

NOVEMBER EVE

(As he reaches the door, Ilva herself flings it wide and stands smiling on the threshold against the last red of the sky. She is carrying a little black lamb in her arms under her cloak.)

ILVA *(in a sweet, clear, happy voice)*

God save all here *and* the cat!

BEGA *(rushing to her)*

Praised be Mary and her holy Son! 'Twas the black fear had me for you, pulse of my heart!

ILVA

Sure it's sorry I am, indeed, granny darling, but how would I be guessing that, and me sending you the good word by Donal?

BEGA *(caressing her)*

The mightiest good word, and it sent from above, wouldn't have had me comforted, alanna, and you without in this Eve falling. *(She draws back suddenly in terror, her eyes on the black lamb that is disclosed more fully as Ilva throws back her cloak.)* God save us! What is that creature you have there?

ILVA

It's only a poor, strayed lamb it is. It's the running after it has me so late. Nigh enough to touch it I'd get two score of times—then away with it, the rascal! Nearly destroyed it is, poor thing! with racing and baa-ing!

BEGA *(still fearful)*

And what will you be after doing with it now?

ILVA

A suppeen of milk will be good for it, I'm thinking. Let you pour me some in a noggin, granny

NOVEMBER EVE

dear, while I do be laying it beside of the fire
the way it will not be missing its ma's warmth.

*(Bega goes over to the cupboard with her, still
reluctant, and pours some milk into an earthen
bowl, while Ilva takes out an old shawl from a
settle near the hearth and places the lamb upon it.
She then begins warming the milk at the fire.
All watch them intently in silence.)*

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN *(in a low voice)*

That is a queer girl to be saying "God save the
cat" and bringing in a black lamb with her.

ANOTHER OLD WOMAN

Indeed, and she is very queer . . . but she is
good too.

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN

Some day the king of the cats will be after com-
ing to her . . . then she will be sorry. . . .

THE SECOND OLD WOMAN

They say that she does be understanding the
crickets' talk . . .

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN

I am thinking that is not a good sign.

THE SECOND OLD WOMAN

I am thinking so, too . . . but she is a good
girl. . . .

SHEILA

Oh, isn't it afaid you are Ilva, and it a
black lamb and no one owning it, and on this
Eve?

ILVA

Why would I be afraid?

NOVEMBER EVE

NORA

Sure it's on this Eve the dead take strange shapes . . . It's a bad spirit maybe, and it all black. . . .

THE OTHERS (*crossing themselves*)

God save us!

ILVA (*laughing gently*)

Why then, I'll cross its milk for it, and if it's anything evil 'twill away with itself up the chimney! (*She dips her fingers in the warm milk drawing a cross in it, then holds them to the lamb which sucks them eagerly.*)

BEGA (*eying the lamb anxiously, but with some relief in her voice*)

The holy sign does not be hindering it surely. It's a natural creature it is, after all, maybe, and it sucking the child's fingers the like of its mammy's tits.

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN

And it's I am thinking a black lamb is not a good sign itself, let it be natural or unnatural.

DONAL

Well, it's Shamus McGee will not be agreeing with you, Stranger Lady, for that lamb is his or I'm a King of Turkey. It's only an hour gone by I heard him screeching names at a black lamb of his would be always racing the hills, and it gone this day since the sunrising.

BEGA

Shamus McGee's, is it? The Lord give him better luck! I've a light heart within me once more at that news! Let you be pouring out the

NOVEMBER EVE

drink, Donal. When Ilva has the lamb fed, we'll sit down to supper. And let you girls be helping me tie the candles and apples to the ends of the kipeens for trying fortunes, the way we'll be having great fun afterwards. Where's the fine length of string I gave you this morning, Maurya?

MAURYA

The pig with the perished ear has it eat, bad luck to him! It was only a minute or two I left it on the bench without when I was gathering the rowan, and before I could get at him he had it down him, the ugly glutton!

BEGA (*vexed at the loss of her fine string*)

It's a poor thing to be calling an innocent dumb beast the bad names you should be giving your own carelessness. I've had that string in saving since November Eve these two years gone by! There's not the like of it to be had for wishing, I can tell you.

DONAL (*taking a twist of string from his pocket*)

Sure, I thought it was string you might be wanting, mother, so here's a grand piece could be tying up the fish of Jonah, and he in his wicked tempers for want of another man to swallow.

BEGA (*all smiles again*)

Ah, the grand boy that you are! There will not be a thought loose on the air, and you not thinking it!

(Some begin tying the apples to one end of the kipeens and the candles to the other. Some bustle about the supper-table, helping Bega.)

NOVEMBER EVE

Ilva covers the lamb with the old shawl and joins them.

A wandering Friar opens the door.)

THE FRIAR

God's blessing upon this house and all in it.

BEGA (*hastening to greet him*)

A hundred welcomes before you, Father. Come in . . . Come in. . . .

THE FRIAR

Why, it is to a feast that I am welcomed, and I not knowing! Sure, God is good to us poor Friars. . . .

BEGA

Come, draw in close to the fire, Father. (*To Ilva.*) Let you be pushing up a chair for the Man of God, child honey. . . . It's glad you must be to get in doors on November Eve. . . .

THE FRIAR

Are you thinking of the saying that the good people and the dead are in power this Eve? Sure then, and how would I be believing in the fairies, and me a Man of God? (*Then he speaks to Ilva, who is going to the door with a bowl of milk in one hand and a platter of food in the other.*) For why are you going to the door with all that, daughter of the house?

ILVA

It is for the good people and the dead, Father.

THE FRIAR

Well, God save all creatures! . . . But I would not be opening the door too often this Eve, and the sun down.

NOVEMBER EVE

BEGA (*with great pride in her, taking twelve mould-candles out of the cupboard*)

See what I will be lighting here against evil, Father. One for each of the twelve apostles, and myself made them. (*She lights them and sets them in a circle.*)

ILVA (*taking some tiny mould-candles from a chest and also lighting them*)

And see what I have been after making for the little people, Father. It's always kind and good they are to us, when we are kind and good to them. . . .

THE FRIAR

Well, though I'm not believing in them, it's kindness is the best in everything.

DONAL

Mother, the wind's rising. Will I put the corrag against the door?

BEGA

There's no need for that at all . . . It's a right door and shuts fast. I do be only keeping the "old-man of branches" for old times' sake. (*Listening.*) But it's a wild, mighty blast surely, to be lepping so quick out of the still night. (*To the Friar.*) It was you had the saints leading you, Father, to be finding this place in the nick of time.

THE FRIAR

It was the saints, indeed, were in it for me, lady of the house. A man of God himself would be lonesome and frightful, and he without in that gale howling. Sure, it screeches the like of a heathen savage!

NOVEMBER EVE

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN

And why wouldn't it, and it coming from the heathen East? (*Rising and pointing.*) It's the Red-wind it is, and the spirits of the dead and the powers of darkness do be riding on it!

THE FRIAR (*crossing himself in horror*)

The holy saints and angels of the Throne protect us!

ALL

Amen. Amen.

ILVA (*dreamily*)

Ah, the poor dead with never a living soul willing to speak to them, and they maybe needing comfort . . . I am thinking I would like to say a kind word to one of them this very night. . . .

BEGA

Now God forbid! . . . Is it losing your wits you are, alanna?

THE FRIAR

God forbid, indeed!

ILVA

But, Father, sure it would be a work of love to God, and you going out and seeking to comfort them?

THE FRIAR (*crossing himself again*)

If it was needing me one of them was after, it's I would be going to him surely.

ILVA

But now would you be knowing if one of them was needing you?

NOVEMBER EVE

THE FRIAR (*crossing himself again*)

It's calling for help he would be, of course.

ILVA

And you would go to him? You would go out into this night raging, into the wind and the dark, and they with the power on them?

THE FRIAR

It is my duty I would be after doing at all times, and it's the strange questions you do be asking, let me tell you. It's the strange girsha you are entirely. From where are you coming, I wonder, to have learned your fill of such foolishness?

ILVA (*the mystic look growing in her eyes*)

I come from far . . . as you do . . . as we all do. . . .

THE FRIAR

And where from is that? And how am *I* coming from it, tell me kindly?

ILVA

From long and far it is, and we all coming from it. . . .

THE FRIAR

Sure I was born very near this place, and it's not the far journeys I've ever taken. . . .

ILVA

Is this hand me myself? If you were to be cutting it off, it would not grieve, *I* would grieve. Is this foot myself? Is this body up to my chin myself? You could be cutting it off up to my head, but let my head still be thinking, and *I* would still be *I*. Ah, it is not your body is you

NOVEMBER EVE

yourself, and it is you yourself is coming from afar . . . and so with us all. . . .

THE FRIAR

Is it your soul you are thinking of, poor distracted child?

ILVA

It is not then, Father . . . for it is the like of you are teaching us we *have* souls, but I *am* this. . . .

THE FRIAR (*holding up his hands*)

God send her light! Is it Fairy-struck she is, the poor wretch?

BEGA

Oh, my sorrow!

ILVA

But it's you are not believing in the fairies, Father! Sure, granny darling, you'll not be letting his words hurt you, and he not believing in them! . . .

THE FRIAR

It's the wild, daft, saucy creature you are entirely. I'm thinking there were no hazel rods growing near this place when *you* were growing up! Sure "Fairy-struck" is the common name for persons afflicted the like of you, and it's enough to make an anointed priest talk heathenry just to be listening to you!

BEGA (*anxiously*)

It's not the bad child she is indeed, your reverence, though she does be talking queerly at whiles. She means no harm at all, at all.

NOVEMBER EVE

THE FRIAR

No harm, is it? And she taking up for the Sidhe as if they were after being real creatures and her blood kin at that! (*To Ilva.*) I wouldn't wonder now, if you were not only believing in them but having a great wish for them as well!

BEGA

God forgive you! Let you not be saying such things, and you under my roof.

THE FRIAR (*gazing at Ilva severely*)

Let *her* be answering me.

ILVA (*softly smiling*)

I do be praying every night that they may win to heaven at the last day!

THE FRIAR

Now God have mercy upon you! . . . It's an evil madness is on you surely!

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN (*muttering to herself*)

'Tis only fire is the sure charm against *that* madness.

ILVA (*turning herself quickly, having heard her*)

Sure I have a sweet fire within my heart will be a charm against anything.

THE FRIAR

A fire in your heart?

ILVA

A fire of love for all things . . . for the fairies and the poor dead, wandering in this wild night and none to comfort them . . . for the good and for the bad . . . for all, all, all, is this sweet fire burning in my heart. . . .

NOVEMBER EVE

DONAL (*to himself*)

For all but me, my sorrow!

(As Ilva ends speaking, a sudden gust tears open the window and extinguishes some of the Apostles' candles, but none of those lighted for the fairies.)

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN (*starting up*)

A fairy blast! A fairy blast! Look! It's only the candles of the holy saints it has put out!

THE OTHERS

Oh, wirra! wirra! Oh, misfortune!

BEGA

Pray . . . pray O man of God!

THE FRIAR (*trembling*)

May He preserve us . . . May He stretch out His strong right arm between us and evil. . . .

(As he is speaking Dermot bursts into the room, like the dead with terror.)

DERMOT

O ochone-y-o, go deo! . . . Shawn Rua has murdered his wife! He has stuck a black knife into the heart of her and away with himself to the hills! . . . O ullagone! Ullagone! Ul-lu-lu!

(The others take up his lamentation, keening with him.)

DONAL

Here! . . . Let me to him, will ye? It's murdered he looks himself . . . Here

NOVEMBER EVE

drink this, Dermot. 'Twill steady you. (*He holds a glass of potheen to Dermot's mouth.*)

DERMOT (*drinking and gasping between his gulps*)
O, I seen it! . . . I seen it! . . . My eyes are
blasted with it . . . There's nothing is clear
about me . . . My sight's clean gone from
me. . . .

DONAL (*making a sign to the others to be quiet*)
And how was it? How were you seeing it?

DERMOT

Sure I was belated on my way home . . . I
thought to ask shelter from this Eve under
their roof . . . and 'twas by the window I
was coming . . . O God! O Mary!

DONAL

And what then? Take another drink. . . .
What then?

DERMOT

'Twas a black word to and fro between them
. . . and she smiling very wicked with that
little red, cocked-hat of a mouth of hers, and
the life blazing in her the like of a bonfire . . .
and then. . . . O God! O God! . . . Is it
me, weeping like an infant child before you?
Oh, it's sick I am for my mother's breast to
hide me! . . . And the solid world flowing
round about me like water. . . .

THE OTHERS (*keening*)

O ul-lu-lu! Ul-lu-lu!

DONAL

Steady, Dermot . . . steady . . . There's my
hand . . . hold fast by it. . . . You're safe,

NOVEMBER EVE

man . . . you're safe entirely. . . . Now.
What next?

DERMOT

'Twas the smile and that together, like the clap
of doom. . . . The knife was in her and the
smile still on her . . . back she fell and arched
herself upon the floor like a salmon with the
gaff in it. O the doom is on me to have seen
it! . . . The black doom is on me! . . . I will
have no rest until I die. . . . O God! O Mary!

*(As he is speaking a white shape of mist drives
by the window, then another. Then a little face
under a red cap peers in.)*

A GIRL (*screaming*)

O, the little face! . . . The little face! . . .

ALL

Where? Where? God save us . . . Mary
preserve us. . . .

THE GIRL

At the window . . . A little face and a red
cappeen on the top of it. . . .

THE OLD STRANGER WOMAN

Let somebody be putting a smear of ashes on
the window so that none can look in.

SHEILA

Let yourself be doing it, Stranger Woman.

OONA

It's not me would be going to that window for a
sack of diamonds!

NORA (*suggestively*)

It's Phelim is the nearest to it, and he a man.

NOVEMBER EVE

PHELIM (*springing farther away*)

Sure then, it's no nearer I'm going to it, and me three men!

(All this while the Friar is muttering Ave Marias and Pater-nosters, with his crucifix and rosary held up before him, but taking in what is being said around him. As Phelim speaks he looks up sharply.)

THE FRIAR

Let all of you keep away from that window, I'm saying! Let none of you go near door or window, in the name of The Trinity! (*He begins telling his beads again.*)

DONAL

Here, Dermot, drink again. . . . 'Twill steady you. What next?

DERMOT

There he stood staring at his bloody work and the face on him like white jelly . . . then with a great screech he burst from the place and away to the hills with all Hell after him. . . . For God's love, give me more . . . give me more. . . . (*He goes on sobbing, the potheen slopping over on his hand.*)

DONAL

Now God have mercy on all sinners . . . 'Twas Shawn Rua was a good friend of mine. . . .

OTHERS

And he was my friend . . . And he was mine. . . . Who would be thinking that of him now? 'Tis the Devil himself is loosed tonight . . . Ay, 'tis not only the dead and the Sidhe . . .

NOVEMBER EVE

'Tis out of Hell itself things are coming this night. . . .

AN OLD WOMAN

He will have been just learning tonight what we've all known this long while about that wife of his— 'Tis that is in it.

SECOND OLD WOMAN

'Tis that is in it, surely. . . . And Con Fadh is in it, too. . . .

FIRST OLD WOMAN

'Twill be his deserts he's after getting, and he out alone in this night of Judgment. . . .

OTHERS

The black murderer! . . . And him murdering a woman too! . . . And she the wife of his breast! . . . A right doom it is! . . . It's the Man Above is in it to drive him forth into this night to meet his judgment!

ILVA

Oh, the poor, poor, wicked man! Have you none of you a soft thought to your heart for that poor man, all alone with the mad elements and his dark soul! Have you no love in you at all, at all!

THE FRIAR

What! Love for a black murderer! Shame to you!

ILVA

Isn't it he is needing it more than any? Sure, love is for the empty not for the full. . . . Will you not be saying a prayer for him, Father, and he alone with all the powers of Hell against him?

NOVEMBER EVE

THE FRIAR

Prayers is it? Sure my tongue's cramped with saying prayers for ourselves to protect us from the Black Powers that are abroad tonight . . . Sure and it's a sin I'm doing, to stop and talk with you. (*He falls to muttering his prayers and telling his beads again.*)

(All this while little faces under red caps have been peering, off and on, in at the window, and white mist-shapes driving by. The Others are all talking together in low voices.)

ILVA (*plucking the Friar by the sleeve*)

Slip in a prayer for him, Father . . . Do now . . . Slip in a bit prayer for him. Sure, it was sorry he was the minute it was done . . . Sure now, you said you'd go out into this same night to a soul that needed you, and it calling for help. Sure it's help he's needing . . . sure it's help he's calling for. . . .

THE FRIAR

Whisht! Let me alone, daft girsha! . . . Would you have me neglect the souls of the good within here, for that blood-dipped soul without? It's not he will be calling for help . . . All his breath is taken striving with the Evil One. . . .

(As he ends a wild and fearsome cry thrills through the night.)

THE VOICE OUTSIDE

Help! help! . . . O save my soul! . . . O help! . . .

NOVEMBER EVE

(All stand aghast. The rosary falls from the Friar's fingers.)

ILVA *(pointing at the Friar)*

Now you are hearing him! . . . Now it is calling you, a soul is!

THE FRIAR

All Heaven protect me! . . .

ILVA

You said you would go . . . Will you go now?

THE FRIAR

'Twas the wind. . . .

THE VOICE

O help me! . . . O save my soul from Hell!

ILVA

Was *that* the wind?

THE FRIAR

God be good to me a sinner. . . .

ILVA

Are you going? . . . Are you going? *(The Friar seems stupefied with fear. Ilva turns about to the others.)* Is there no one is going? . . . Are all of you hearing that and none going? . . . Donal . . . it is you are always talking of the power and the grace and the beauty of love? . . . Will you go for love of me? . . . Will you go, Donal? . . . I will go with you, if you will go. . . .

DONAL

Is it to Hell you would be taking the two of us? . . . All else that is in the world would I do for you. . . .

NOVEMBER EVE

ILVA

Christ went down into Hell to help the poor souls there. . . .

DONAL

Christ is One by Himself, mavourneen.

ILVA

But if we have Him in our hearts we are safe surely. You will not go? . . . You will not go even with me? Then it's alone I'm going!

(She makes a sudden spring to the door, opens it, and is without before any can stop her. They hear her voice dying away, calling: "Take courage, poor soul! Courage! Courage! I am coming! I am coming to you!" As the door is closing on her, Donal rushes towards it, though the others try to keep him back. He tears it open in the wind and struggles out. No sooner has he done so, than he is flung violently back into the room, half-stunned. As the door slams to and fro in the wind, before anyone has thought to fasten it, a sudden gust blows out all the lights and wild, little, trilling laughter is heard outside, rising and falling. "Ah, ha-ha-ha! Ah, ha-ha-ha!")

CURTAIN

NOVEMBER EVE

THE SECOND ACT

Scene: A wild heath running off into hills on every side. In the distance is the Lake of Shadows. There is a mad moon spinning down the sky behind black clouds like a wheel of cold fire. Now it is light, now dark on the heath in patches like a sickness. There is a loneliness over the place like that before the world was, and there is nothing stirring but the wind.

Now Ilva is coming over the heath and the wind is blowing her hair in a dark cloud over her, and her face under it is white and wild like the moon.

ILVA (*running a little way and stopping, and running again with her hands out before her*)

Oh, it was a black lamb I was seeking on this heath today, and tonight it is a poor black sheep! O Shawn Rua! Shawn Rua! Will you not answer me? It's with help I'm coming to you, poor Shawn! It's with good I'm coming to you. It's with fellow-love and pity in my heart I'm seeking you and calling to you, Shawn, poor Shawn!

(A white mist drives by her.)

A VOICE FROM THE MIST

That way . . . he was going that way . . .
I met him . . . Ah-ha!

(The mist drives past with a strange laughing sound.)

NOVEMBER EVE

ILVA

Christ's love on all creatures. . . . That was a trembling thing . . . My heart in me is alight, but the dark comes over my eyes. . . . Shawn Rua! Shawn Rua! . . . In God's name be answering me!

(A dun mist it is this time that drives by her.)

A VOICE FROM IT

He went to the left. . . . He went to the left. . . . I met him! Ah-ha! *(It drives past with a smothered chuckling.)*

ILVA

Mary Mother, take care of me. . . . It is very fearful here and I far from home. . . . Will you never be answering me, Shawn Rua?

(A black mist streaked with fire drives by her.)

A VOICE FROM IT

To the right . . . to the right . . . He went to the right. I met him! *(It drives past with a nickering sound.)*

ILVA

I have gone backward . . . I have gone forward . . . I have turned to the left and to the right. . . . Oh, will none give me the straight word! The light is burning in my heart but it does not guide my feet. . . .

(A Woman-shape of fierce beauty, pale and flickering, pauses near her, a red wound open like a little mouth in its breast.)

NOVEMBER EVE

THE SHAPE

I will give you the straight word . . . I will lead you to him. . . . It's I have power to find him, and he snuggling under the throne of Hell!

ILVA

The Son of God and His mother to my help! . . . Oh, they have answered me! I am helped of Heaven. . . . I can look upon you and speak to you now, O woman of the dreadful eyes! Christ's pity upon you. Why must you be seeking that poor man?

THE SHAPE

It is he was ever loving to see me fine . . . I must show him this red jewel on my breast. (*She points to the wound above her heart.*)

ILVA

Now I am knowing who you are! Oh, forgive him! Oh, have pity on him! Let you be remembering he was your wedded man and the first days of your love together! . . . Do not be seeking him this night to do to him what he has done to you! It's you are free now and he chained to torment. . . . Forgive him! Pity him!

THE SHAPE

I am not knowing how to forgive . . . I am not knowing how to pity . . . Half of me is hate for him, and half of me is love for another . . . And before I am drawn away to the Far Places, I will see him and he shall look, against his will, at this ruby on my breast.

NOVEMBER EVE

ILVA

As you will be looking for peace and rest . . .
have mercy on him!

THE SHAPE

Never no more will I have peace or rest . . .
But vengeance I will have. . . .

ILVA

Vengeance is God's alone. . . .

THE SHAPE

He has lent it to me for this night! (*She skims over the heath, this way and that, then stops suddenly with an eldritch cry of triumph, and stays so, pointing at Shawn, who lies face down on the ground at her feet.*) I have found you, Shawn Rua, I have found you! . . . Call on the hills to cover you, but they will stand fast! Call on God and His saints to come to you, but they are rooted to the heavens with horror of this earth! I am here, Shawn Rua, and God is far!

SHAWN (*starting up like a mad thing, running wildly about and about, and giving his terrible cry again*)

Help! Help! Save my soul! Oh, save my soul from Hell!

ILVA (*running between him and the Shape*)

It is Christ's help I am bringing you, poor Shawn! Call upon Him! . . . Him between you and harm . . . His love between you and hate. . . .

THE SHAPE

He is the just . . . He is the judge . . . His

NOVEMBER EVE

justice and His judgment to bring us face to face, Shawn Rua!

ILVA

His mercy is great as His justice. . . . Call on Him, Shawn! Call on Him!

SHAWN (*his eyes always hidden*)

Oh, is it a murderer would speak that name? I am lost! . . . I am lost! . . .

THE SHAPE

You have judged me. . . . He will judge you as you have judged me. . . .

ILVA

He prayed for His own murderers . . . He will pray for you Shawn. . . . Here is my hand, hold fast to it, poor man.

SHAWN

Who are you that has come to Hell to me with a drop of water?

ILVA

I am Ilva . . . I am your little playmate that you were always kind to.

THE SHAPE

Look on me, Shawn Rua. . . .

SHAWN (*hiding his eyes with both hands*)

Never, while I have strength. . . . Never, while I have life. . . .

THE SHAPE

Shawn Rua, it is written that you shall look upon me . . . Shawn Rua, you shall look upon me through my blood that is on your hands.

SHAWN (*with a dreadful cry*)

Oh, I am seeing her through my eyelids! . . .

NOVEMBER EVE

I am seeing her through my hands! . . . Oh,
I will see her forever! . . . I will see the world
through her as through a glass!

ILVA

Shawn! Shawn! Hearken to me . . . There
is a Voice speaks at my heart. . . . Could you
be forgiving her, Shawn? Could you be saying
that to her? Sure the power to harm you would
go from her, and you forgiving her. . . .

SHAWN

O, girsha, that has never loved! . . . It's my-
self I cannot forgive. . . . All my life would I
pour out like water, and she alive again!

THE SHAPE

O Ul-lu-lu! . . . He has stripped me of power!
. . . He has milked me of poison! . . . I am
drawn backward like a flame in a draught!
*(She begins to vanish little by little. As she
fades, she cries with a voice growing fainter and
fainter:)* But it's you have looked on me,
Shawn Rua! . . . It's you will never be for-
getting me and the red jewel on my breast.
Never no more! Never no more!

*(Shawn falls face down along the ground like one
dead, and Ilva kneels beside him.)*

ILVA

I am here, Shawn . . . I am with you . . . I
will not leave you. . . .

SHAWN *(as in a dream)*

What is that kind voice? . . . How is it I am
in Hell, and a kind voice speaking to me?

NOVEMBER EVE

ILVA

It is still in this world you are, poor Shawn . . .
and it is me, Ilva, that is speaking to you.

SHAWN

Seven hundred thousand kisses have I set upon
that breast . . . That should have been a
strong charm against evil . . . 'Tis a magic
breast-plate it should have been . . . yet the
knife went through it like butter. . . .

ILVA

Shawn! Shawn! Turn your eyes to me . . .
Do not stare like that . . . What is it you are
staring at so, poor Shawn?

SHAWN

At a little red mouth in a white breast, and it
calling to me . . . I must be going . . . I must
be going to its call. . . . (*He starts up, but
Ilva holds him fast by the hand.*)

ILVA

Shawn, there is nothing calling you . . .
Shawn, it is a dream is on you.

SHAWN

Will I never wake up, never no more?

ILVA

Say a prayer together with me . . . say "Christ
have mercy upon us all poor sinners."

SHAWN

It is calling louder than you are . . . It is
saying "You are damned, Shawn Rua, you are
damned forever and ever."

ILVA

There is not anybody whatever in all the world

NOVEMBER EVE

is damned forever . . . there is not anybody under the world is damned forever . . . there is not anybody in Hell is damned forever.

SHAWN

Who are you again? And how is it you are knowing that?

ILVA

I do not know how I am knowing it, but I know I know it.

SHAWN

And how could it be the like of that?

ILVA

God is Love.

SHAWN

Satan is hate. It is not God is in it for me but Satan. I am knowing him now for the first time. Near and far he is . . . and grips without arms and grinds to powder without teeth and is Hell in himself without fire. Above me and below me he is, without me and within me . . . I am all his and he is all mine. . . .

ILVA

Wake, Shawn! Wake!

SHAWN

Whisht! Do you hear that sound?

ILVA

I hear a humming sound far away. . . .

SHAWN

It is the black beating of his heart in the middle of the wide air . . . and my heart is set to the beating of it . . .

NOVEMBER EVE

ILVA

It is a dream! It is a dream! Wake, wake, in
Christ's name!

SHAWN

Where is it we are?

ILVA

On the heath near home. . . .

SHAWN (*with a cry of terror*)

Let me go . . . Let me go! . . . I feel the rope
stretching on my neck. . . . (*He rushes wildly
about in circles.*)

ILVA

Oh, Shawn, Shawn! It was never a coward
you were! Don't be running away from your
sin . . . Take it to you and it will turn to peace
upon your breast. . . .

SHAWN

Let me go, I'm saying! . . . Let me go! . . .
Is it two murders you'd be putting on me?
(*He strikes at her savagely.*)

ILVA

Oh, it's entirely mad he is, and me not strong
enough to help him! . . . Oh, will none help
me to help him! . . .

(*Little glancing lights begin to flit in the air
about Shawn. He strikes at them again and
again, in senseless terror. They dance before
him whichever way he turns and stop him.*)

SHAWN

The Sidhe! The Sidhe! The Sidhe! (*He falls
unconscious to the ground.*)

NOVEMBER EVE

(Ilva kneels beside him again and takes his hand.)

ILVA

O Lord Christ, he was not knowing what he did! . . . Speak to Mary, Your mother, for him . . . Come to him in his sleep and turn his heart . . .

(A low music of many high-strung harps sweeps under the ground beneath her. The little lights rise and fall about her over the heath.)

ILVA

What is that music? . . . I am homesick for a home I have forgotten with that music . . . I am remembering that music like a thing I never knew in this world grieving . . . *(The music sweeps by again but nearer.)* Where is this place that I am? . . . And who am I? . . . Ilva they call me . . . but that is a name only . . . *(The moon steals out from under a cloud.)* Now I am knowing this place in the moon-shining . . . It is the fairy-fort near the Lake of Shadows . . . but who I am I do not remember yet. . . .

(The music comes again, still nearer. And now a strange sweet Voice begins singing. It is like a sort of talking in song.)

THE VOICE

Help is to you from the very-far, clear-shining
place,
O maiden of the loving eyes, of the deep loving
heart:

NOVEMBER EVE

Is not this music recalling to you
The time when you yourself were singing it?
Singing it you were, to flowers that sang back
to you,
Leaning sweetly between the gold-crystal
columns
Before the House that is full only of joy;
Many the birds of white-silver plumage were
listening to you.
Without pain, without grief, without death,
Without sad awakening from pleasant dreams of
the long-departed,
With that which is hid in the heart, seen of the
glad, long-empty eyes,
This is the sign of that land.
Is it not now you will be remembering?
—Many coloured, changeful with blowing-
leaves,
Without rain, without frost, without darkness,
Ever gentle in the light of early morning,
Full of the sweet sound of laughing even in
sleep,
But with no sound of weeping in any part of it.
Such is that place. Are you not now remember-
ing?
A fair spirit of rainbow fire,
Starry, exceeding beautiful, pure exceedingly,
And it closed within a vessel of white clay
Until the time of returning,
Until the time of fulfilling of joy;
O Maiden, O Spirit, now you will be remember-
ing! . . .

ILVA

I came from afar . . . from afar . . . but

NOVEMBER EVE

where from I could not remember . . . Now I am remembering . . . I was lonely in my sleeping, and lonely in my waking, and loneliest of all when I was with those I loved . . . Now loneliness is going from me. . . .

(Ior appears before her in a soft, white haze of light, and in the likeness of a beautiful young man clad in shining garments, a branch with silver leaves and golden apples in his hand.)

IOR

How is it with you now, O beautiful!

ILVA

I am dreaming a fair dream, and in it I am not lonely any more.

IOR

Do you know me?

ILVA

Like my face in water.

IOR

What is my name?

ILVA

I have never known it, and always known it. I have never remembered you, but never forgotten you. I will call you Heart's Desire.

IOR

It is you are the desire of my heart . . . But why is it you are holding your hand over your own heart?

ILVA

There is such a strange, sweet pain in it. It is like a little harp strung too high. I think it is going to break.

NOVEMBER EVE

IOR

No, it is only strung for the sweet music I will be drawing from it.

ILVA

It is making a sweet music of its own already.

IOR

It is I am making that music on it.

ILVA

Do not stop then . . . I think it is death for me . . . but do not stop, for I am finding death sweeter than life. . . .

IOR

O song of my heart, O girl of frost and fire, it is easy to see that never before in this life have you known love!

ILVA

Is this love? . . . I thought it was death . . . How am I so changed, and it not death? . . . How am I living and myself, and yet no more the same, and yet not dead?

IOR

You are dead and now live. . . .

ILVA

I am thinking all my life is in you, and you have come to me at last. And what was before was nothing . . . and what is now cannot be added to . . . I am thinking I loved you before the stars were lighted, I am thinking I will be loving you after they are blown out. . . .

IOR

Are you not yet remembering the place where

NOVEMBER EVE

we first loved, and where we will be loving when the stars have withered?

ILVA (*passing her hand before her eyes*)

It was a place of pale, soft shining, and sweet flowers, and a singing of many waters round about it. At whiles I am seeing it like a gold-cloud low in the evening air, and at whiles it is a cloud of silver on the far side of the moon . . . Where is it? Oh, tell me! Where is it? For I am homesick for that place with you . . .

IOR

It is here and it is there. It is for them that have eyes to see it. . . .

ILVA

Oh, what ails my eyes that I cannot see it!

IOR

Loose your hand from the hand of that wicked man, and I will show it to you.

ILVA

He has none but me to help him . . . He will go quite mad and destroy himself maybe, if he awakens, and I not here. . . .

IOR

Are you thinking of such as he, and I beside you?

ILVA

It is very hard indeed to do it . . . but great is my pity . . .

IOR

It is not so I am loving you . . . there is no little strand in me has thought for anything beside my love for you.

NOVEMBER EVE

ILVA

Oh, are we different then, even in one little strand? For there is one in me is aching with pity for him.

IOR

You are not yet remembering clearly that fair place, nor the love we had together in it. If you remembered that, you would not be thinking of anything or anyone else but me in all the worlds . . . But I will seal his eyes and open yours, and then you will draw away your hand and put it in mine, and leave him to go alone to his right doom without another thought for him. (*He sweeps the branch of silver leaves before Shawn's eyes and then before the eyes of Ilva.*)

(All about them a soft haze gathers, then melts slowly, revealing a fair land with trees of silver and fruit of gold, like the branch he is holding. Strange, dream-like flowers bloom about them. On the pale sea are boats of glass with masts of emerald wound with lilies, and in them fair women singing softly. Ilva stands gazing with wild joy in her eyes, and at her feet Shawn lying like one dead.)

ILVA

Oh, it is home you have brought me! It is life everlasting you have given me . . . It is your love is in me like the mother's life in her child, and I am more yours than I am mine! Now I remember! . . . Now I remember!

NOVEMBER EVE

IOR

And are you knowing me now?

ILVA

It's the star-ray is knowing the star, as I am knowing you. It's the flower is knowing the scent, as you are knowing me. Your life in me and mine in you, and you drinking me like the sun the sea. Oh, you have swum the black pool of forgetfulness to me as Fraech swam to Findabair, but fairer and dearer are you to me than he to her. . . . For it was darkness was over my eyes, it was dreaming was in my heart, but it is only you now that is in all of me and I in you!

IOR

And can you now be naming our true names?

ILVA (*passing her hand again before her eyes, a trouble gathering in them*)

I call you Heart's Desire.

IOR

There is a name to you, and a name to me, and they only known in this place where is no pain or sorrow of any kind. Can you be telling them?

ILVA (*the troubled look growing*)

But there is pain somewhere. It is not mine, it is not yours . . . yet it is hurting me . . . How can that be?

IOR

You have not yet remembered wholly . . . You have not yet forgotten wholly . . . Wait . . . I will sing to you and that singing will

NOVEMBER EVE

put all else from you. (*He takes a harp of gold and ivory and begins to sing.*)

This the old, ever-new song of songs,
Chaunted first in this land by two alone,
To one tune only could even an angel be singing it.

By threes it may not be sung even by angels.

Grief that is past may tighten the heart-strings fitly,
Then sweetness of sweetness when it is played upon them;
Grief that is present will only rust and slacken them:
None may draw this song from a grieving heart.

Not grief for himself, not grief for any other,
Must be in the heart of him who would sing it meetly
Nor in her heart who listens must there be sorrow
Nor any thought at all save of him singing.

Long and long ago I chose you to be my heaven,
Long and long since then, and I never regretting it.
God and His angels all are less indeed by far to me,
Than one of the little flowers were kind to us in our loving.

More to me by far than the circle of Mary's halo

NOVEMBER EVE

The soft, red ring of your mouth in the kiss of
kisses.

This is the song that I sang, and you singing
it back to me,

Long and long ago, when I chose you to be my
heaven.

ILVA (*with a dazed, glamourous look*)

But sure this is heaven and God in it?

IOR

You are in it, and I am in it, and love is in it.
Is not that enough?

ILVA

But there is fear in it too . . . a great fear is
coming over me. . . .

IOR

Love is a dread God . . .

ILVA

No— God is love and casts out fear . . .

IOR

Without pain, without grief, without death
. . . that is the sign of this land. . . .

ILVA

But there is pain somewhere . . . there is
grief somewhere . . . Somewhere there is death
. . . I have remembered this place, but other
things I have forgotten.

IOR

Give me your hands, O Dearest! Give me
your heart, O Sweetest! Give me your soul
for my sealing, O my Desire!

NOVEMBER EVE

ILVA

My soul is within you already . . . It is like
as if my life were going from me . . .

IOR

Come to me, heaven that I chose! . . . My
life for yours. . . . From my heart into yours
it is flowing . . . Is it not heaven that you
have taken in your arms in taking me?

ILVA (*dreamily*)

My heart is like a little cup of gold . . . Sweetly
it is filling . . . filling . . .

IOR

It is brimming over it will be soon . . . Soon
it will be holding nothing but my love. . . .

ILVA

I am forgetting where is pain. . . .

IOR

Oh, little cup, fill faster! . . .

ILVA

I am forgetting where is grief. . . .

IOR

Fill faster, little cup, that holds my joy!

ILVA

I am forgetting what is death. . . .

IOR

Brim over, little cup, brim over!

SHAWN (*crying out as in sleep*)

Help! Help!

ILVA (*starting from Ior's arms and staring dazedly
about her*)

Who called me and it was not you?

NOVEMBER EVE

IOR (*striving to keep her in his arms*)

If you go from me now, you cannot come back to me. . . .

ILVA

But it was for help . . .for help someone was calling. . . .

IOR (*striking his harp*)

Hear the song that I sang and you singing it back to me,

Long and long ago when I chose you to be my heaven!

ILVA (*turning slowly to him as though in sleep*)

Long and long ago when I chose you to be my heaven. . . .

SHAWN

Oh, there was one here helping me! . . . She was praying for me! . . . Now I am all alone in Hell and dare not pray. . . .

ILVA

It was I was helping him! . . . It was I was helping him!

IOR

Will you leave me and all my life in your heart? . . . Will you be leaving me and love alone together in this fair place that is your home? Stay a little . . . Stay! Think! . . . If it is only once that you are answering that cry and forgetting our love . . . if it is one single time only . . . I must go from you . . . you must go from me forever. . . .

SHAWN

Ilva! Help! Help!

NOVEMBER EVE

ILVA (*with a desperate cry*)

Oh, Love of love! Oh, sorrow of sorrow! . . .
Who was it gave His life for another! . . .
Shawn! Shawn! I am coming to you!

*(The fair vision vanishes in a surge of darkness,
and Ior with a great cry is swallowed up in it.
Ilva finds herself upon the wild heath beside
Shawn, who is just rousing from his stupor.)*

SHAWN

Pray for me . . . pray for me . . .

ILVA

O Lord God, be merciful to this, Thy child!
O Son of God, be pitiful to this, Thy brother!
O Son of Mary, whose mother was a woman,
hear the prayer of a woman whose heart is also
pierced!

CURTAIN

NOVEMBER EVE

THE THIRD ACT

Scene: It is in Bega's kitchen again. The door is wide open now and a pale dawn is shining over the wide heath and low hills and the far Lake of Shadows. Most of the guests have fallen asleep. The Friar is still telling his beads. Bega lies in a sort of trance with her head on Maurya's shoulder. Then Donal comes in haggard, his head bound where it was struck when he fell, his face the face of one who has been seeking in vain. Some of the others seem about to question him, but he lifts his hand and drops it again with a gesture of despair. He leans watching, watching against the door. On a sudden he starts back and turns as if to speak. Some rise, but there is silence upon them. Donal points as to some one coming.

Then Ilva appears, walking slowly, her arm about Shawn, who is coming with his head bent, and weak, dragging steps. Bega sleeps on, the others stand awestricken.

ILVA (*entering the cottage with Shawn, and speaking in a spent, weary voice*)

Here is a poor, broken man who has made his peace with God, and desires to answer for his sin to men. (*She leads him up to the Friar.*) Hear his confession, Father.

(Shawn sinks on his knees before the Friar, hiding his face in his hands. Silence is still

NOVEMBER EVE

upon the others. Only Donal starts towards Ilva as if to speak, but she stands listlessly, gazing empty-eyed before her.)

DONAL

O heart of me! why do you look so strangely?
Will you not speak to me?

(She is not hearing him. She is gazing beyond him, out of the world. Suddenly, the music of a harp, sweet and faint, sweeps by outside, and a voice singing to it. The others hear the music but not the voice. They cross themselves, cling to each other, are like things stricken.)

THE VOICE

Long and long ago I chose you to be my heaven,
Long and long since then, and I never regret-
ting it:

God and His angels all were less indeed by far
to me,

Than one of the little flowers were kind to us
in our loving!

(Ilva moves forward step by step to the door as if drawn there, the rapt look still on her face.)

DONAL

What ails you, soul of my soul? What ails
you? . . . Do not look like that? Do not be
going from me like that?

VOICE

More to me by far than the Circle of Mary's
halo,

NOVEMBER EVE

The soft, red ring of your mouth in the kiss of
kisses.

This is the song that I sang and you singing
it back to me,

Long and long ago, when I chose you to be my
heaven!

DONAL

Speak to me . . . Speak to me . . . My soul
is within you! It's I, Donal, who love you, that
am near you . . .

THE VOICE

Hear only the song that I sang and you singing
it back to me,

Long and long ago, when I chose you to be my
heaven.

ILVA (*reaching out her arms to the dawn beyond*)

Oh, my heart's desire! . . . Oh, the loneli-
ness! . . .

DONAL

Lord God! the Sidhe! . . . The Sidhe have
stricken her!

CURTAIN

THREE MODERN JAPANESE PLAYS

Translated by

Yozan T. Iwasaki and Glenn Hughes

THESE short plays, while different one from the other, are the direct result of Western influences and are representative of the new drama movement in Japan, which is, not supplanting, but very decidedly challenging the *No*, the *Kabuki*, and the *Doll-play*.

The Razor, (5m. 1w.) a drama in one act, by Kickizo Nackamura, was first published in Japan in 1914. Within one year it had been performed seventy-one times in the principal cities of Japan and Manchuria. **The Madman on the Roof**, (5m. 2w.) a play in one act, by Kan Kikuchi, was published in 1919, and in 1920 it was produced at the Imperial Theatre, Tokyo. Kikuchi is considered one of the most clever and versatile writers in Japan and is in great demand among Japanese readers. **Nari-kin**, (5m. 2w.) a farce in one act and two scenes, by Yozan T. Iwasaki, was written in 1919 and has been produced many times. Mr. Iwasaki was born in Japan, received his education there and in the United States, and for several years has lived in Seattle, where among other activities he has directed the work of play production for Jiyu-geki-dan, a Japanese dramatic company devoted to the presentation in Japanese for Japanese audiences of the plays of such dramatists as Ibsen, Shaw, Tolstoi, Hauptmann, Strindberg, and the newer dramatists of Japan.

12mo. 104 pages. Decorated Boards. \$1.50
¾ Turkey Morocco, \$6.50

STEWART KIDD

PUBLISHERS

FIVE ONE-ACT COMEDIES

By *Lawrence Langner*

Introduction by *St. John Ervine*

THESE one-act comedies have unusual variety and originality, and have been produced successfully by the Washington Square Players, the Provincetown Players, and other theatre groups throughout the country. Mr. Langner possesses that gift which is rarest in American playwrights—a keen sense of satire and a sure touch. His comedies, which read as well as they act, show a humorous understanding of human relations and institutions. Mr. Langner was one of the founders of the Washington Square Players and the Theatre Guild, and is a pioneer in the new theatre movement in America. As *George Jean Nathan* says: "This Langner will bear watching. He is a fellow of ideas and genuine humor."

The plays are: **Matinata** (2 m. 1 w.) **Another Way Out** (2 m. 3 w.) **The Family Exit** (4 m. 3 w.) **Pie** (2 m. 2 w.) **Licensed** (1 m. 2 w.) *Roscoe W. Brink in the New York Tribune*: "Smart, finished and polished things they are." *Houston Post*: "Refreshing plays, streaked with humor and originality." *New York Evening Post*: "Sure comedy touch, clever dialogue and actable scenes." **George Bernard Shaw**, in a letter to the author: "The plays are very good: I read them all through with undiminished appetite; and so did my wife."

Silk, cloth. 165 pages. 12mo. \$2.00.

¾ Turkey Morocco, \$7.50.

PORTMANTEAU PLAYS

by Stuart Walker

Edited, with an introduction, by Edward Hale Bierstadt

First Volume

PORTMANTEAU PLAYS

The Triplet deals with a certain magic thing which can cure all the ills of those who find it. (3m. 3w.) **Nevertheless** is an interlude, played before the curtain, which tells of a burglar's regeneration through two children and a dictionary. (1m. 1b. 1g.) **The Medicine Show.** A character study from the banks of the Ohio River. (3m.) **Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil.** The story of the Queen who stepped on the King's Great Aunt's ring-toe, of the Boy who hid her, and of the Six who passed on the way to her beheading. (8m. 2w.)

12mo. Illustrated. \$2.50

Second Volume

MORE PORTMANTEAU PLAYS

The Lady of the Weeping Willow Tree. Based on an old Japanese legend, and one of the finest and most effective of Mr. Walker's pieces. Three acts. (2m. 4w.) **The Very Naked Boy.** A slight, whimsical, and wholly delightful bit of foolery. One act. (2m. 1w.) **Jonathan Makes a Wish.** A charming fantasy of youth and dreams. Two acts. (6m. 4w.)

12mo. Illustrated. \$2.50

Third Volume

PORTMANTEAU ADAPTATIONS

Gammer Gurton's Needle. An adaptation of the second extant sixteenth century English comedy. Five acts. (6m. 5w.) **The Birthday of the Infanta.** A dramatisation of Oscar Wilde's poignant story. (5m. 2w.) The next two plays are original plays by Mr. Walker. **Sir David Wears a Crown.** A sequel to *Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil.* (13m. 4w.) **Nellijumbo.** (4m. 2w.)

12mo. Illustrated. \$2.50

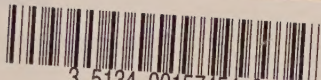
J. O. Lamson in the *Baltimore Sun*: "Mr. Walker is really by way of being a poet. No one seems so subtly to get inside the child mind while writing for the theatre. While these plays have both action and pictorial values, the delightful way in which the phrases are turned and the inherent tenderness that is such an insistent note throughout are things that combine to make them strangely attractive." **The Chicago Evening Post**: "These plays really make as good reading as they make playing." **Oakland Tribune**: "They are whimsical and charming, natural with the naturalness of a child."

The illustrations in all three volumes are of actual productions.

[illegible]

#47-0108 Peel Off Pressure Sensitive

1990年 10月 10日 星期日 10月 10日



3 5134 00157454 6

PS 3092 .S37 1923
 Rives, Am elie, 1863-1945.
 The sea-woman s cloak

~~812~~
~~T 55~~ ~~Queen State Library~~
~~ism~~
GENERAL LOAN COLLECTION

RULES GOVERNING MAIL ORDER LOANS

Books loaned through local public libraries or through traveling libraries are subject to the rules governing them.

No charge for books.—The books circulated by the State Library are free to all citizens of Oregon who will agree to observe the rules of the library and pay transportation charges both ways on books loaned. Shipment is made by mail or express and all prepaid charges must be remitted upon receipt or return of package.

Borrowers.—Adults not previously registered as borrowers should if possible apply through librarian of local public or traveling library, school officers or principal, county school superintendent, member of the Legislature, officers of the local grange or other permanent organization, or give reference to some state officer located in Salem. Reference is not essential to service. Minors must obtain signature of local librarian or school principal.

Number of Volumes.—Any reasonable request for books will be granted if applicant wishes them for study or research work and books are not needed elsewhere.

Time Kept.—Books must be received at the State Library within 28 days from the date of loan. They may be renewed for the same period upon request, as long as needed for study, unless reserved for other borrowers. Date upon which books will be due in the library is given on notice of shipment. Some books will be issued for shorter period and may not be renewed.

Groups of books for home clubs and libraries are loaned for longer periods of from three to six months.

Fines.—A fine of one cent a day must be paid for books kept, without renewal, beyond period for which loan is made. No book will be loaned to anyone who has failed to meet the obligations of borrowers as given in these rules. Notice will be sent when books are five days overdue without having been renewed.

Lost and Injured Books.—Borrowers are held responsible for books and are required to pay for lost and injured volumes. Number of pieces loaned is given on notification postal and borrowers are held responsible for this number unless notice of shortage or error is sent immediately upon receipt of package.

Books must be kept clean, must not be marked and corners of leaves must not be turned down.

